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**STUDY OF DIALOGIC APPROACHES AND RESPONSES IN
PLANNING LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES IN MARACAIBO,
VENEZUELA. THE “PROMOTION OF FULL CITIZENSHIP”
PLAN.**

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PLAN.**

by

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Dedication

My gratefulness goes firstly to God, who gave me strength and wisdom to go through this project and helped me to carry out this research, which made me realize how important it is to create knowledge that can be shared for the benefit of others, especially the low-income communities of my dearest Maracaibo. Thank you for guiding me and being by my side always.

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I greatly thank my family for being with me all the way, encouraging and supporting me through good and bad during this time. Thanks to my mother here on earth and my father who is now in heaven for the effort they put in their lives to guide my education and support my strength. To my wife Marjorie for the love expressed and for believing in me, and our daughters, Sofia and Sara, whose arrival to the family has given me the enthusiasm and motivation to always go on despite the obstacles.

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**Study of Dialogic Approaches and Responses in Planning Low-Income
Communities in Maracaibo, Venezuela. The “Promotion of Full
Citizenship” Plan.**

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The research followed up a local development initiative in Maracaibo, Venezuela, named *Programa Promoción de la Ciudadanía Plena* (Promotion of Full Citizenship Program), a joint initiative that has sought to bring the population of low-income communities to the sphere of citizen participation with a revaluation of citizenship and the promotion of participation. The research included first, a preliminary bibliographical review of the theoretical framework to understand the significance of citizenship and participation at the community level and the implications of organizational development and self-improvement approaches in development projects and institutions, and second,

the review of the principles of the local program and the social-economic data of the four communities considered in the study.

The results of a preliminary survey (secondary data provided by the municipality) of adult heads of household from the four communities, who openly expressed to the institutions their interest in participating and benefiting from the program, and the passive observation of local meetings and workshops in the communities contributed to the analysis. A series of open-ended interviews to facilitators (3 individuals) were conducted in 2006 in order to assess the facilitator's identification with the program's objectives and the possible bond between the learning assumptions and their personal experiences while working in these communities.

That same year, a final series of open-ended interviews to a sample group of 39 beneficiaries (30% of the group that successfully completed the citizenship and technical education), provided the input to assess the impact of the program in the motivation of people toward participation and self-improvement. In these events, information was extracted, which contributed to the evaluation of people's expectations and attitudes, as they differed or not from the initial condition. A methodological guideline, in the form of field notes and questionnaires, was needed to address and manage conversation and dialogue.

Following an interpretive and constructivist approach, evidence was inferred from the logic of the narratives gathered in meetings and interviews, and a coded frequency of responses. Findings suggest that the initiative strengthened local people's empowerment by involving them in the collaborative identification of problems and issues affecting their lives, in all activities planned to tie the relationship among stakeholders, and in every recognition and public ceremony. People's improvement depended on economic growth, but it was necessary that beneficiaries develop and exercise their capacities,

abilities, knowledge, information and motivation, which were necessary conditions to improve the quality of life of local residents, and consequently, to strengthen the local social capital. Project agents did it with a respectful dialogue in the decision-making concerning the design and construction proposal, and recognizing people's own capacities, which assured collaboration and feedback. People did not participate unless they believed that an interest or individual benefit was possible; and for them, the immediate interest was economic.

People associated changes to the following values –from high to low frequency of response: being more confident, reaching mutual support, improving communication, strengthening unity, consciousness, and achieving better social relations. Empowerment of the individual as head of household was strengthened by his or her involvement in the collaborative identification of household limitations and housing-related issues. Nevertheless, beyond the individual and household levels, the success of the educational strategy was not sufficiently effective to reach changes on people's attitude and motivation to confront and interact in the solution of community-related issues, but the increase of 6 percent in this indicator indicated that change was possible but required the sustainability of the educational approach in the communities.

By the time the field research ended, a perceivable empowerment and partnership approach, with all the complex administrative and intellectual assumptions, guided *Ciudadanía Plena* toward its set goals. The attention and dedication in the four barrios were based on the need to materialize an ideal that was expected to expand in order to reach more communities in the near future. The transparency, the material incentive and the citizenship education to achieve self-improvement and empowerment were key elements to achieve change and improvement.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Chapter1: The “Nature” of the problem.....	7
The path of urban development	7
Overcoming poverty through community learning.....	14
Values, beliefs and marginality in Venezuela.....	17
The local problem and the research proposal	25
Conclusions.....	31
Chapter 2: Theoretical framework. The community approach in the development framework and the Venezuelan Experience.	33
Citizenship and community development.....	33
Participation and community development	46
The use of participatory methods and techniques in development.....	51
Organizational approaches applied to community development.....	62
Opportunities for citizenship education	67
What the national experience can tell: Social and community participation in Venezuela.....	69
The role of the Venezuelan Municipality	83
Conclusions.....	90
Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods	93
From Participatory action research (PAR) to Participant observation (PA)	93
Methods.....	98
Validity	116
Chapter 4: Case Study: “Promotion of Full Citizenship as a mechanism for overcoming poverty in Maracaibo, Venezuela”.	118
Antecedents. The United Nations Urban Management Program for Latin America and the Caribbean.....	119
The city of Maracaibo: Urban poverty, housing and citizenship.....	126
Origins and philosophy of “Ciudadanía Plena”	134

Main characteristics of the program	136
Development model of partnership.....	141
Chapter 5: Findings. Representation and characterization of the community and people's responses.	177
Characteristics of the beneficiaries	178
After a year of delay, what did beneficiaries expect? Responses of the community prior to the implementation phase of the program.....	205
Rejecting the right to self-development.....	212
What beneficiaries revealed about the citizen education process during the implementation phase.	222
Characteristics of the community's response	226
The program's local promoter as factor of development.....	231
Facilitator's experience during the citizen education process	243
Beneficiaries' self-reflection and action as factor of development.	257
Chapter 6. Final Discussion	281
Interpreting the participatory approach.....	283
Education and training	286
Response to the main questions	291
Tangible results	297
Reflection.....	299
Appendix A. National Housing Policy in 2000	302
Appendix B. Housing Sector Planning in Venezuela	306
Appendix C. Household Survey conducted by Ciudadania Plena (In Spanish) .	310
Appendix D. Semi-structured interview to facilitators of citizenship education workshops	315
Appendix E. Semi-structured interview to beneficiaries of housing improvement loans.....	332
Appendix F. Examples of home improvement projects.....	501
References.....	503
Electronic References	512
Vita	515

List of Tables

Table 1:	Added values of stakeholder involvement.....	49
Table 2:	Households in poverty according to unsatisfied basic needs.....	82
Table 3:	Poverty indicators that guided the municipality in the selection of barrios.	104
Table 4:	Number of volunteer respondents, 2002 survey.	107
Table 5:	Initial number of applications by type of credit.....	108
Table 6:	UMP-LAC strategic areas of investment and support.	120
Table 7:	Population growth in the city of Maracaibo.	128
Table 8:	Population in Barrios in main Venezuelan cities (1991).	132
Table 9:	Barrios chosen in the second phase of the program.....	140
Table 10:	Case Studies. Comparative table.....	165
Table 11:	Population by economic sector.	181
Table 12:	Number of families by income group.	183
Table 13:	Land ownership by community.	185
Table 14:	Home ownership by community.....	185
Table 15:	Identification of risk conditions in the community.....	195
Table 16:	Participation in community groups by community.....	199
Table 17:	Reasons for not participating by community.	201
Table 18:	Do you believe there should be other community organization?	201
Table 19:	Participation in neighbor groups by community.....	204
Table 20:	Rate of withdrawal as of December 2003.....	221
Table 21:	Reasons for withdrawing from the program.	221

Table 22:	Number of credits granted in 2003 and 2004.....	227
Table 23:	Conclusions from focus group (2004).	229
Table 24:	First moment of reflection. Notes from meetings held in 2002.	233
Table 25:	Second moment of reflection. Notes from meetings in 2003 and 2004.	234
Table 26:	Group's assumptions tied to the concept of citizenship.....	237
Table 27:	Facilitator's responses. Comparative table.	250
Table 28:	Sample group (2006).....	257
Table 29:	What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?	259
Table 30:	Association of identified actors.	262
Table 31:	What institutions do you associate with the program?	262
Table 32:	Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?	265
Table 33:	Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?.....	268
Table 34:	Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?.....	269
Table 35:	Would you like to continue participating in the program?	270
Table 36:	What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?	272
Table 37:	What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?	273
Table 38:	Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbors' association?	274
Table 39:	If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbors' association?.....	274
Table 40:	If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?....	275
Table 41:	If negative, can you explain why?	275

Table 42:	Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community?.....	277
Table 43:	What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?	279
Table 44:	Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?	280
Table 45:	Impact in regard to participation.....	298
Table 46:	Housing Plans and Programs	308

List of Figures

Figure 1:	Research activities timeline.	102
Figure 2:	Map of Venezuela and location of the city of Maracaibo.....	128
Figure 3:	Maracaibo. Political subdivisions and locations of Barrios.....	131
Figure 4:	Municipality of Maracaibo. Parishes assisted during the initial phase of implementation and their corresponding Barrios.	141
Figure 5:	Participation of partner institutions in the Full Citizenship Program.	144
Figure 6:	Sequence of activities of the program.....	167
Figure 7:	Logical Levels of Change.	173
Figure 8:	Research Activities Timeline. Preliminary contacts and Household survey.....	179
Figure 9:	Employment condition.....	182
Figure 10:	Land Ownership in the four barrios.....	186
Figure 11:	Home ownership in the four barrios.	186
Figure 12:	Participation in neighbor groups.....	205
Figure 13:	Research Activities Timeline. Attendance to staff training.	231
Figure 14:	The making of the organization's vision.	242
Figure 15:	Research Activities Timeline. Interviews with facilitators.....	244
Figure 16:	Interpretation of individual changes according to facilitators.	256
Figure 17:	Do you think that community participation is important?	276
Figure 18:	Problem solving priorities according to beneficiaries.	278

List of Illustrations

Illustration 1:	Irregular and uncoordinated urban growth in Maracaibo.	23
Illustration 2:	Formal and organized urban growth.	23
Illustration 3:	Maracaibo's periphery.	132
Illustration 4:	Dwelling built with disposal material in barrio Miraflores.	152
Illustration 5:	Unpaved roads in barrio Miraflores in 2002.	152
Illustration 6:	Infrastructure works supervised by community leader.	153
Illustration 7:	Sport court in barrio Miraflores occasionally used for community meetings.	153
Illustration 8:	Layout of barrio Miraflores.	154
Illustration 9:	Street pavement built in 2003 in barrio Rómulo Gallegos.	156
Illustration 10:	House affected by land filling.	156
Illustration 11:	Site of demolished house due to land subsidence.	157
Illustration 12:	Land filling of empty lot.	157
Illustration 13:	Layout of barrio Romulo Gallegos.	158
Illustration 14:	Community meeting at a local school in barrio 23 de Marzo. .	160
Illustration 15:	Presence of indigenous population.	160
Illustration 18:	Layout of barrio 23 de Marzo.	161
Illustration 16:	Sidewalks built in 2004 in barrio 23 de Marzo.	162
Illustration 17:	Street pavement built between 2005 and 2006.	162
Illustration 19:	Community meeting at local church planning the implementation of the program.	163
Illustration 20:	Dwelling in Barrio A. de Lusinchi showing some improvement. No solid sidewalk or fence is visible.	163

Illustration 21:	Layout of Barrio Angelica de Lusinchi (Sector I).	164
Illustration 22:	Initial shack (rancho).....	192
Illustration 23:	Addition of new spaces.	192
Illustration 24:	A dwelling is repaired.	192
Illustration 25:	Some external finishing.....	192
Illustration 26:	The municipality builds infrastructure and services.	192
Illustration 27:	Fences and exterior walls.	192
Illustration 28:	Participatory assessment in Barrio Miraflores.....	224
Illustration 29:	Participatory assessment in Barrio Rómulo Gallegos.....	224
Illustration 30:	Introductory workshop in Barrio 23 de Marzo.....	225
Illustration 31:	Meeting with community leaders in Barrio A. de Lusinchi....	225
Illustration 32:	Housing improvement project. Example 1.	501
Illustration 33:	Housing improvement project. Example 2.....	501
Illustration 34:	Housing improvement project. Example 3.	502
Illustration 35:	Housing improvement project. Example 4.....	502

Introduction

In the last decade, a consensus in the development framework has recognized and emphasized the role of non-governmental organizations and civil society, not only as executors and service providers, but also as innovators and critical sources of thought, and as agents and partners of governments that carry out plans and projects to lessen the consequences of poverty. This role advocates the promotion and implementation of new urban policies toward this goal. The compromise exercised in the program *Promotion of the Full Citizenship*, in Maracaibo, Venezuela; reflects the acceptance that social learning is a right of society in general which concerns every citizen, and that the vision, goals, contents, processes and modalities should be discussed and negotiated through more participation of all actors involved, including the targeted beneficiaries. Following this compromise, if development agents, promoters, advocates or facilitators expect to produce an impact in the communities in which they work, by means of the development programs or initiatives that they carry out, it is important that these agents take into account the opinions, expectations and criticisms expressed or sensed by the immediate beneficiaries for the retrofitting of their planning and implementation procedures. In order to design, follow up and improve programs, the individuals and the institutions they represent should assume the incorporation of local actors in the dynamics associated with such programs, in the management and coordination of activities, and in the registration and diffusion of the information and results of evaluation processes.

In my assessment of the local development initiative, I followed Diaz's aspiration (1985), which points out how those who participate are creators and followers of the actions that can transform their reality. This implies that the collective definition of

problems, the group analysis, and the dialogic approaches represent learning opportunities for people in their own environment.

The *Promotion of the Full Citizenship* Program, a local initiative since 1997, that fully initiated its implementation in 2003, has integrated the effort of the University of Zulia, through the Research Institute of the School of Architecture and Design and the HABITAT-LUZ Foundation, the CESAP Foundation, the Municipality of Maracaibo, the United Nations' Urban Management Program for Latin America and the Caribbean (UMP-LAC¹ or PGU-ALC in Spanish language), and a group of organized low-income communities located in the city's periphery. The program was designed to promote a new model of citizenship education and a culture of participation through individual and collective strategies that include education in citizenship values, small savings and loan opportunities, and technical advising and training.

While I was preparing the research proposal at The University of Texas prior to my trip to Venezuela, I proposed to follow a Participatory-Action-Research (PAR) approach to contribute to local people's self-recognition and improvement at the same time knowledge was produced in a methodological way. However, in the field I later found out that the program's facilitators promoted these social outcomes as part of the implementation strategy, but without any research interest. I, as researcher, tended to interact with the program's community advisors, facilitators and beneficiaries, using a participant observant (PA) approach while attending the community meetings and educational workshops and conducting individual post-credit interviews of a sample group of beneficiaries and facilitators who provided me with information for the evaluation and the interpretation of outcomes. In that way, I expected to learn from the

¹ Urban Management Program for Latin America and the Caribbean.

beneficiaries' knowledge and experience about people's community participation and organization.

The field research was programmed to be initiated at the beginning of 2002; but first, a delay of the national government transferring financial resources to the municipal administration; and second, a national strike during that same year, postponed the beginning of the implementation phase and the allocation of credits until 2003. Despite these inconveniences, during those first two years a number of potential beneficiaries in low-income communities were invited to attend a series of introductory meetings, to participate in a social-economic survey, and were visited on a house-by-house basis to assess the nature of their household's requirements.

At the same time, the investigation was initially planned to carry out a progressive evaluation of the total group of beneficiaries of the two sub-programs (habitat and housing improvement and micro-enterprise improvement). Due to the difficulty of obtaining the data of the total group and my personal interest in housing issues, I followed up with the group of beneficiaries of the housing improvement component. Nevertheless, the socio-economic data covers 100% of initial participants to avoid misinterpretation of the social group. From the initial number of twelve communities in which the program initiated in 2003—at the time the field research ended in 2006 the number had increased to 54 communities—I chose to conduct the study in four communities located in four different parishes within the urban limits of the Municipality. These low-income communities or “barrios” were *23 de Marzo* in Idelfonso Vasquez parish, *Miraflores* in Antonio Borjas Romero parish, *Romulo Gallegos* in Coquivacoa parish and *Maria Angelica de Lusinchi* in Luis Hurtado Higuera parish. Only in these communities, the municipal implementing agency started both the “Habitat and Housing Improvement” and the “Strengthening of the Local Economy” programs.

I carried out a literature review to introduce the arguments and review local data and the pilot experience. Subsequently, I observed staff training sessions and community meetings during 2003 and 2004, and the community assessments of the program held in 2004. I conducted in-depth interviews with program facilitators and 10% of the clients of the housing sub-program in the four (4) communities, which accounted for the highest percentages of credits that were granted in 2003. This last phase was conducted at the beginning of 2006 after most of the physical improvement projects were already concluded and clients had paid, partially or fully, their monthly installments.

Chapter one provides a brief reference to the way in which the community approach has been considered in the development framework for more than half a century; from its consideration as a residual component with minimum relevance to its active incorporation in a more recent empowerment paradigm. The dimension of urban poverty is associated with the significance of the educational and organizational approaches and the purpose of changing the attitude and behavior of citizens, a condition that must accompany the development of the community. In this section, an emphasis in the Venezuelan case is determinant to understand the social context of the research. The contextual framework introduces the problem and the case study in the city of Maracaibo and allows the formulation of the hypotheses that have oriented the work.

The theoretical definitions of community, association, and participation and their implications in community development and the construction of citizenship are explored in chapter two. From these approaches, the chapter introduces the tendency of the development actors and partners to put into practice participatory methods and techniques in the project cycle of social programs, in investigation and action. Chapter two also considers organizational development as a way to learn of and reflect on people's conducts and attitudes as applied to community development and poverty reduction. The

reference to the community experience in the country and the role of the Municipality as the privileged space for local policymaking and participatory development contributes to the case study.

Chapter three is a general overview of the methodological principles in order to explain the research's assumptions and organization. The steps to evaluate the impact of the program *Promotion of the Full Citizenship* on the beneficiaries are described. The research follows up meetings, workshops and informal interviews, which are organized through time according to the researcher's expectations and goals.

Chapter four introduces the program in Maracaibo, Venezuela, as part of a group of experiences promoted by the PGU-ALC. A description of the program's origins, philosophy, characteristics and components or sub-programs are presented, which, following a development consortium model as the organizational and operational principle of the program, links different local institutions and communities in an effort to strengthen citizenship values which can contribute to the improvement of the local habitat and economy.

In the program's experience, set to reduce the consequences of poverty in the barrios, the agents of development found it necessary to learn about the characteristics of the communities and to observe them from both the individual and family levels. In this sense, chapter five introduces the beneficiaries and presents the results of the monitoring of the program; taking into account the assessment of the participation of the beneficiaries and the agents of development, that is, program agents and facilitators. It also accounts for people's opinions about the citizenship education process, the credit system and its requirements, the institutional changes in response to the new demands, and the propensity to contribute, as a result, to solutions of local problems such as natural hazards, infrastructure improvement or consolidation of dwellings.

A final discussion in chapter six develops an interpretation of the hypotheses in relation to the case study approach and addresses the consequences of the exercise of local development in regard to people's self-improvement, values, attitudes and to follow up on community-oriented initiatives. In addition, the citizen education approach, based on Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), points to an important outcome. NLP, which has been extensively used to strengthen private sector performance, is introduced to poor residents in an attempt to set the basis for individual and collective change, with the expectation that personal motivation and self-development can transcend the individual conduct oriented mainly toward the solution of household needs to reach a more proactive attitude toward the participation in the solution of community-related issues.

It is necessary to point out that, as in every project cycle, the necessary periodic monitoring of activities, results, and personal achievements allows to optimize the strategies implemented in the project, to identify unexpected problems and limitations, and to establish alternative lines of actions. All these processes should be carried out to guarantee the sustainability of the pre-defined objectives and the values that are promoted. Moreover, the research has been the starting point of a major task that has involved the monitoring and analysis of other components of the program. The Research Institute at the Universidad del Zulia is already carrying out an evaluation of the microcredit system, a study of the local entrepreneurial process, and an assessment of the progressive physical transformation of dwellings, with the aim of contributing to the program's continuance and success in achieving social justice in the city.

Chapter 1: The “Nature” of the problem.

This chapter briefly details the way in which the strategies of local development have considered the community approach for the last half-century, from its consideration as a residual component with little relevance and influence to its active incorporation in the recent empowerment paradigm. Reflecting on this more recent and widely accepted approach, the dimension of poverty is associated with the importance of individual and group education if changes of citizens’ attitude and conduct are expected—changes that should go along with the economic development of a community. The interest is to focus on the Venezuelan case, whose citizenship values and beliefs are discussed. This contextual framework introduces the case study in the city of Maracaibo, and allows the formulation of the hypotheses that have guided the investigation.

THE PATH OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Most of the approaches to development in the past emphasized the commonly accepted theory that increasing the factors of production—capital, labor, technology, human capital, or resources; mainly measured in quantitative terms—would increase economic production and raise standards of living if population growth was reasonable. Development was viewed more as a problem of structure, something that required resource transfer and/or new forms of management in the fields of technology development, capital accumulation and knowledge dissemination. The factors of production were increased but economic growth was less than expected. The role of individuals was not given sufficient importance (Blackburn and Chambers 1998), and “social modernization” was largely conceived of as a residual category (Germani 1972).

During the 1950s, government social services had support not only from the recipients but also from politicians, public agents and intellectuals. In many countries, especially in Europe, the intervention of the State was taken for granted, and the discussion was mainly about its nature and magnitude. Greater intervention by the benefactor state was characteristic in western democracies, eastern European communist countries and many underdeveloped nations, in which programs in education, health, housing and other services were carried out. This decade revealed the “discovery” of the urban problem and its connection to the growing magnitude and scope of Latin American urbanization. Most countries in the region were experiencing what was formerly called “over-urbanization”, a situation where a rapid rate of urbanization did not mean a corresponding growth in industry but a shift of people from low-productivity rural agricultural employment to low-productivity urban employment or underemployment. In major cities, an imbalance between rapid population growth and insufficient employment opportunities produced spreading poverty and squatter settlements. “Barrios” in Venezuela, “favelas” in Brazil, “poblaciones” in Chile, or “villas miserias” in Argentina, were understood as expressions of maladjustment and pathology (Valladares and Prates 1993).

The general concern with development and how to overcome underdevelopment was perhaps best expressed in the Latin-American version of the modernization approach. The urban-rural dichotomy was emphasized and used to explain the difficulties of the mass of rural migrants in adjusting as they flooded major cities, unable to adapt to the employment opportunities provided by the developing urban economy and to urban life. In the late 1950s, the concept of participation, as related to the beneficiaries, first appeared in the development discourse when development practitioners began to notice that the common people were almost completely excluded from the formulation and

implementation of development projects. It was thought that the inclusion of local people would increase efficiency, leading to the improvement of development (Veltmeyer 2001).

In the 1960s, community development built the infrastructure of rural and urban communities. It also developed local skills and abilities and encouraged people to play a part in, and to take some responsibility for, supporting and implementing a range of physical infrastructure work. Marginality theory emerged from the discussions of social change by proponents of the modernization approach. This theory, popular at that time, provided an analytical and practical response to the crude social problems and the non-integration of the recently urbanized poor into the urban life and economy in Latin America. According to its theorists, the adequate solution to these conflicts consisted of integrating the marginalized groups into society and generating channels of participation through “popular promotion” programs.

The idea of a “culture of poverty” (Lewis 1966, cited in Valladares and Prates 1993), inspired by the Mexican urban context, quickly gained notoriety. Supporters of this approach indicated that marginalized groups could not integrate by themselves. It was necessary to have the presence and intervention of external agents, e.g. the State and institutions of promotion (Velasquez 1985). The style was generalized, and the development worker was seen as a government official working at the interface between the outside forces of modernization and the natural conservatism and suspicion of communities. The major weakness of community participation lay in its emphasis on mobilization rather than participation (Alan and Ward 1984). Practitioners usually exercised control externally and perceived the communities as contributing to and supporting national development agendas and not necessarily as being instrumental in determining its content or direction (UNDP 1998).

While community development as a basic strategy of community involvement persisted into the 1970s, it largely lost its predominance. Changing analyses and examinations of underdevelopment in the late 1970s and 1980s began to offer different explanations of the causes of people's poverty and to suggest different forms of project design. The debate, which first focused on the discussion of development versus underdevelopment, became a discussion of development versus dependency. It was seen that, despite the significantly increased investments in infrastructure and services, government programs started facing difficulties. Neoliberal policy reforms and macroeconomic change also had a substantial impact on the whole of the Latin American region. Consequently, the role of the state was introduced into the analysis of urbanization. Recession and adjustment meant cutbacks in public services, privatization of state-managed firms, reduction in the number of new job opportunities and falling salaries. Poor people were seen as excluded and marginalized both from broader societal participation and from direct involvement in development initiatives.

Severe stabilization policies, implemented to deal with the economic crisis and foreign debt, caused considerable drops in domestic macroeconomic indicators. Cuts in expenditures in social services reached unexpected high levels; inflation rose and economic recession weakened previously growing nations. Moreover, at the local level, community development programs became bureaucratic and inefficient in many countries. Often, development officials were associated with corruption and distrust. The dissatisfaction with this categorization of analysis based on empiricism and positivism and the manifested inadequacy of the methodologies to understand the processes added to the progressive compromise of intellectuals with the causes of the poor, and soon generated criticism to this form of analytical response.

The first HABITAT in 1976 emphasized participation. However, the term became a familiar formula in the era of Structural Adjustment Programs, when governments were looking for ways to reduce their expenditures. Changing analyses and examinations of underdevelopment began to offer different explanations of the causes of poverty and to suggest different forms of project design (UNDP 1998), leading to the understanding of poverty and the possible ways of minimizing the effects on the low-income segment of society. Economists and social scientists (Nun 1969, Germani 1972) challenged the prevailing view that capital was the prime mover in development and stressed the productive utilization of labor and less-developed countries' abundant resources as a way to achieve economic growth which was more socially efficient but more equitably disturbed. The dominant role of advanced technology was modified to emphasize "appropriate technology", and more emphasis was laid on decentralized and local approaches to development rather than relying on top-down planning (Mishra et al. 1984). In development terms, the last decades were largely dominated by efforts to promote people's participation but would require fundamental shifts in both attitude and methodology if they were to break decades of top-down, non participatory practices (UNDP 1998).

Policy makers and planners conceived participation as a source of social empowerment, constituting and capacitating the object of the development process as active subjects, involving them in each phase. In the 1980s and 1990s, these alternative approaches coalesced into an intellectual movement with certain identifiable features and basic principles, which Veltmeyer (2001) clearly summarizes as:

- Development as empowerment.

- The need to go beyond the State and the market (The development agencies identified in the dominant development discourse) toward the community (key agency of the development process).
- The incorporation of the targeted beneficiaries, in particular the women and the poor.
- The necessary conditions of participatory development are that it be human in scale (small), local or community-based, and people-led.
- It requires both equity (a more equitable distribution of society's resources, that is, social transformation) and democracy.

España (1999) indicates that countries that have recently reduced their poverty levels have done it thanks to a sustainable rate of economic growth based on exports, the intensive use of labor, and the combination of a series of non-economic factors, such as government leaders and organizations fully committed to fight poverty by means of solid political agreements; and governmental bureaucracies free of interests that might diverge them from their objectives. España adds factors such as transparent governmental public policies that help reduce poverty and increase economic growth; and the technical handling of public policies that introduce means of consultation, evaluation, and reformulation, which make it possible to develop a body of flexible and adjustable public policies to confront poverty.

Following these premises, a reformed State will not only count on administrative and management tools but will also have to take advantage of these efficient and effective factors. The opening and acceptance of society exercised by government agents should be based on joint responsibility and use appropriate instruments for monitoring and control. This would establish a new kind of relationship between the State and civil society. The

later can be represented by NGOs, Universities, community groups, as is the case in this study.

The argument across the range of development literature and practice proposes that the organization and use of participation to mitigate social conflict and direct the distinct forms of expression of individuals and groups have been fundamental instruments of development (Kaplan 1974). Even though there are no current universal interpretations or models of participation applicable to all development, more and more, development practice focuses on the empowerment paradigm, which seeks to strengthen the organizational capacity of implementing agencies and low-income people and their communities through the use of participatory methodologies.

I can argue, however, that if a real change of paradigm is expected, it must come with a profound change in the way society (the State, the civil society, and the individual as fundamental parts of these) thinks about itself and about its capacity to affect the wellbeing of all citizens. In such processes of change, new models of interaction must be developed. For public-private, top-down alliances to become paradigm, it becomes necessary that citizens and organizations recognize that the challenge of overcoming poverty demands more than the traditional national government policies, but larger steps to bring the State and the population closer.

This kind of encounter could be achieved by developing, with the help of all public and private organizations, a culture of citizen cooperation and social responsibility, replacing a culture of dependency with one of compromise and independence for the poor (Fiszbein and Lowden 1999)—important values tied to the empowerment paradigm. Friedman (1988) proposes a restructuring between the “client” and the “planner” to bridge the gap between the “processed knowledge” of the planner and the “personal experience” of the client. Rosenau (1992) points out that planners must

accept the possibility of specific local, personal and community forms of truth. Blackburn and Chambers (1998), place the person in the center of any intervention.

Hage and Finsterbusch (1987) propose organizational change as a strategy for development and recognize that the factors of production require institutional arrangements. In addition to creating jobs, generating income, training the labor force and delivering services, Wilson (1997) emphasizes that development planners must confront civic engagement in a community. In taking into account the values, interests, and perspectives of the potentially supporting and impeding groups, the planner can incorporate them into the planning process. In doing so, the planning function becomes less the formulation of a substantive plan and more the organization of interests, ideologies, consent, and support for a plan that will emerge only after the stakeholders have been organized and heard.

OVERCOMING POVERTY THROUGH COMMUNITY LEARNING

Besides the study of traditional indicators of poverty such as the poverty line, life expectancy, infant malnutrition, illiteracy or lack of access to basic services, one more complete interpretation of human poverty requires the inclusion of social factors and the perspective of the poor. The definition of basic needs also go beyond monetary issues and take into account all the things that a person needs in order to survive including shelter, employment, social participation, and self-improvement.

If we understand that every society has a distinctive set of cultural values and norms any definition of poverty will be attentive to the sets of choices and expectations that individuals have. As researches in Bolivia, Burkina Faso or Indonesia (World Bank 2000) have shown, good social relations are the foundation for many everyday activities in a community. Active membership in local organizations increase household consumption, asset accumulation, and access to credit. It also enhances access to

education and increases security against economic shocks. Similarly, social organizations can increase people's physical security by keeping public and private spaces safer or providing assistance in the improvement of dwellings, conditions that allow people to socialize either collectively or in the household.

Barriers to educational opportunities place a major constraint on people's lives and on their capacity to participate in social, economic and political processes affecting them. Education and training represent investment in people, and so are important ways to put a capacity-building approach to development into practice (Eade 1998), which can lead to positive outcomes in short and long terms. "Capacity" is understood as the ability of individuals, organizations, and societies to perform distinct functions, solve problems, and set and achieve their own objectives (UNDP 1997). Hauge (2001) adds to this definition as the "ability to effectively, efficiently and sustainably perform functions... or produce" for the same goal. It is about the self-organization of a community and the will, the vision, the cohesion and the values to make progress over time.

In addition to any physical development that can improve the quality of life of citizens, capacity development can also contribute. It becomes an endogenous process through which individuals change their rules, institutions, and standards of behavior, increase their level of involvement in social capital and enhance their ability to respond, adapt and exert discipline. Here is where the significance of social education is valued. Social education always seeks attitudinal change and evaluating impact necessarily involves subjective judgment (Eade 1998), thus it becomes important as it is concerned with empowerment, and hence challenges existing power structures at distinct levels.

At the local level, in addition to lacking sufficient funds to initiate their own development endeavor, communities frequently lack adequate organization, administration and technical skills to design and implement such activities. Nevertheless,

training community organizations can empower them to better identify and prioritize their needs, develop strategies to meet them, initiate small individual or collective projects, and sustain their development efforts once assistance is withdrawn. Once groups have been equipped to perform tasks that are required for their participation in the project activities, they can go on to undertake other development activities at their own.

We need to take into account that it is difficult to develop effective programs when government officials have limited knowledge about poor people in their areas (Narayan 2000). If local governments want to achieve the objective of development, and measure the impact of their investments, they need to recognize that the capacity and knowledge of the beneficiaries of development programs is also important. Di Pace and Caride (1997) recommend that, if they assume that community agents are a key factor in the management of development, it is important to integrate processes of citizenship education into community development projects.

Sociological and participatory approaches have been proved effective in capturing the multidimensional and culturally contingent aspects of poverty at the local level (Narayan 2000). When planning a self-evaluation (Di Pace and Caride 1997) or a Participatory Poverty Assessment (World Bank), the community can reach the conditions that allow it to self-analyze its situation and gather information about the resources available to the community, its level organization, and its beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. However, the approach does not only consider the beneficiaries or recipients. While participating and taking part in these activities, development practitioners are transformed as well, not only into investigators or technical analysts but also into potential agents of change who will set the basis for the activity planning with a strong reflective component.

Even though initial training and orientation is necessary before beginning, the objectives of the community work should be clarified among participants at all times. Once again, Pace and Caride (1997) suggest to the technical staff not to arrive at the community to carry out a specific project, but to share an experience. Thus, practitioners can put into practice some initial activities to explain the training strategies that are required to improve the organization and obtain additional useful knowledge. With these ideas, the initial group will progressively acquire the clear understanding that it is not enough to identify a series of problems and ask others to solve them, but that it is important to determine their roots, their characteristics and their effects so that more effective actions can be achieved. However, as Eade (1998) states, the lack of certain skills may hinder people's capacity to challenge or change their situation. Furthermore, Eade also points out that many training programs supported in the name of capacity building do not significantly strengthen people's collective or organizational capacities nor enable them to overcome the forces that oppress them.

VALUES, BELIEFS AND MARGINALITY IN VENEZUELA

In Venezuela, the context of this research, the social-economic crisis has not only shown accumulated social distortions, it has increased them—generating the reversion of some of the social achievements in social-structural mobility. Moreover, it has inverted it, causing the proletarianization of the middle class and the increase of poverty, which currently extends beyond a manageable level for the country, expressed in different levels of social development. In addition to a general increase in poverty, the reduction of the income level of the population and the conflictive political changes, a transformation of cultural identity is perceived. A culture of “urgency” is installed, where the logic of precariousness encourages new conduct in individuals. This transformation is in part a consequence of the consolidation of the urban marginality, an essential characteristic and

defining factor of the social behavior of individuals and their condition as citizens and a phenomenon that is accentuated by a growing social exclusion. The citizen is essentially urban, with practices and customs learned in the city (De Viana 1999).

In the case of the dominant culture in the Venezuelan society, studying small income groups in Caracas and the central region, De Viana (1999: 85) highlights some beliefs associated with an external focus of control. Torres (2001) states that similar characteristics are a response to the enormous distance that has existed between Venezuelans and the oil-dependency, and a State that has spent and invested the income from petroleum in the name of all Venezuelans. Conclusions point out that:

- Venezuelan society is rich because it has abundant natural resources (De Viana 1999). People have not generated the wealth that nature possesses. The Venezuelan tends to believe that being rich does not depend on the capacity or the effort of the individuals, or the capacity of people, but more on an act of luck or the kindness of nature (Torres 2001).
- Every citizen has the right to wellbeing regardless of his/her contribution to society in terms of production and involvement in public life (De Viana 1999). The Venezuelan assumes that capable people are not needed, but simply people that fairly distribute what exists, which corresponds to all and is enough for everyone. The wealth can only be collective, and there cannot be individual wealth (Torres 2001).
- Democracy is a means to reach personal goals and not a means to solve, as equitable, the possible conflicts of interests that can exist in a pluralistic society (De Viana 1999).
- The mechanism to establish social justice relations is through the State and the interventionist democracy and not through autonomous action in society (De

Viana 1999). The State is the solution to all the problems. The Venezuelan has gotten used to seeing the State basically as a share-provider while he/she resigns his/her own responsibility for determining his/her future (Torres 2001).

- The State must assist and protect instead of judge and preserve the abstract order of relations (De Viana 1999).
- The recognized rights do not imply duties as a counterpart (De Viana 1999).
- Education is considered more as part of a social precept than as a way to become more efficient and productive. The Venezuelan citizen classifies education as an expense and not as an investment (Torres 2001).

De Viana (1999) concludes that the beliefs and the forms of evaluation or valuing preferences characteristic of the dominant Venezuelan culture affect the disposition and capability of individuals for economic success and productivity. This hypothesis is a constituent of the causality relation in the complex problem of poverty in a major sector of society. The author found out that practically nine out of ten individuals are convinced that changes in the environment are beyond his/her control. Such a belief translates into a phenomena: individual initiative restraint, limited motivation to participate in collective processes, difficulty to associate personal efforts with achievements, denial of individual merit and the belief that the world is problematic, aimless, complex, and unfair.

An interesting outcome of De Viana's research points out that 87.7% of the Venezuelan population he studied believes that change occurs independently of the person's capability, will and behavior. Change is perceived as a consequence of fate, luck, or derived from the action and control of other agents. It is unpredictable and uncontrollable due to the great complexity that surrounds the individual. Only 12.3% of the population in the study believed that change depended, for it to happen and to develop, on action itself. This attitude is applied to beliefs such as the capacity of the

individual to act upon reality, the idea of a world where there is a solution to difficulties and problems, the possibility of a fair social order that responds to the individual, and the idea that public issues can be directed through action and pressure from those involved.

These attitudes are the result of a social and political process where the State has proven to be inefficient, corrupt, and far from the reach of the expectations of the urban poor. It is not by chance, as España (1999)² points out, that 80% of the population over 18 believes that the problem of poverty in Venezuela is a consequence of corruption, bad administration and/or governmental incompetence. Moreover, 60% of the population believes that richness is a product of corruption, stealing or having contacts in the government.

Venezuelans also believe in the existence of an immense wealth that equally belongs to all. If they are not well, it is because another person is taking their share. It is for this reason that the majority of Venezuelans believe that corruption is the only problem to solve. It is enough to eliminate the corruption so that each one can receive his/her share and live well, although many recognize that the appropriate “contacts within the government” become necessary in order to enlarge the possibilities of economic success (Torres 2001).

An additional complication to the task of overcoming poverty transcends the cultural conduct of citizens and shapes the physical approach to urban planning. Such a hurdle exists in the disorganized interventions of urban settlements, where the reduction of adequate levels of investment in the housing sector, in combination with the absence of general planning policies to control and manage the “territory”, has proven to be a constant variable in the urban evolution of the Venezuelan cities. In fact, this condition

² A research group from Caracas conducted a nationwide study to evaluate the cultural maps of modernity in Venezuela applying a survey to 14.000 homes in the country. The results showed that the country is essentially pre-modern, lacking the cultural tools to overcome poverty (España 1999).

has had a negative impact on people's motivation. Most of the time investments have tended to be associated with electoral campaigns and political clientelism, which have contributed negatively to the formation of the precarious material and social dimension in which Venezuelans are immersed. The same urban reality has further weakened the social base and increased urban poverty, as it shows growing levels of spatial segregation, social exclusion and individualism.

Urbanizing poor neighborhoods means offering their inhabitants the possibility that the city, understood as the urban quality of life, can fully enter in the neighborhood with its public utilities, its planning regulations, and adequate design and construction processes. However, urbanizing these barrios goes beyond their physical rehabilitation, especially when these wrongly called "marginal" areas become objects of attention (Baldo and Villanueva 1997). Urban development programs targeting these areas should be accompanied by strategies to support and strengthen the local economy, the intra-barrio networks of economic activities, the social and organizational web of relations, and the individual's self-development. This trend should emphasize the intervention of the quantitative housing deficit using diverse qualitative variables such as the creation of the social base through processes that take into account the organization at the local level, the education and the participation of the community, and the self-development of the individual and the family group. On a superior level, these processes should take into account the implementation of education and communication models to strengthen the relationship between the State and civil society, and set up new urban policies and procedures³.

³ The *Consortio* Catuche in the barrio Catuche, Caracas, was the first cooperative approach to be formed, in the nineties. It was conceived of as a civil organization with participation of the organized community, a group of Jesuit priests who worked in the community and another group of professional urban planners from Universidad central, amongst the latter the architect Josefina Baldó. These three actors made a common cause as partners in order to prepare a plan to clean up the stream crossing the barrio (Lopez 2008: 13).

Despite this tendency, there are few local references to interventions in areas of uncontrolled growth that are directed to improve the material conditions of life of their inhabitants and, at the same, their condition as citizens as there is little worry nor capacity to attend and lessen the specific deficiencies that the majority of the barrios possess. Perhaps the magnitude of the immediate problem is enormous – deficit of housing and services—. Perhaps the attention is neither comprehensive nor agreed.

The Venezuelan citizen wants to participate but, at same time, is tired of being deceived and manipulated. He/she has the disposition, attitude and desire to assume his/her social and collective responsibilities, and thus, to be emancipated in some measure from the paternalistic, when not disruptive, shadow of the State. Nevertheless, as Cordoba (1996) affirms, many times he/she does not know how to do it. Civil society has seen the absence of organizational capabilities to search alternate solutions while the government, local or national, has demonstrated its lack of professional experience and social sensibility in the formulation and articulation of urban planning programs.

Lopez (2008: 19), in her study of two barrio redevelopment projects in Caracas, concludes that participants and public servants involved in both initiatives recognize that the poverty, the violence and the insecurity prevailing in the barrios, together with the lack of education and political formation, are obstacles to a robust and independent participation. Lopez also points out how

People begin to lose their enthusiasm—they say and feel that the work is not getting anywhere; to this same extent, they drop out, they get frustrated and they tend to adapt themselves to the requirements of the public servants who, if they too are badly prepared, end up bureaucratizing the process. In general, the participants acknowledge that in their barrios there are many difficulties, there is a lot of apathy when it comes to participating, with a reduced number of activists who tend always to be the same ones.

In the specific case of the city of Maracaibo, the second largest urban center of the country, a multicultural identity—ideas and social representations that have resulted from the interaction of Colombians, Guajiros (a local bi-national indigenous group) and Venezuelans from all regions of the country—has brought increasing social differentiation and has led toward less convenient urban and social models. Such models are manifested in the constant fights for territory (represented by the illegal occupation of land and the irregular settlements that result), the proliferation of the informal sector, worsening of economic activities, less access to social services, (Gonzalez et al. 2000), or less interest in participation in local affairs. Furthermore, as CESAP (2000), a non-governmental organization affirms, the models have projected excessively marginalized urbanization and uneven growth.



Illustration 1: Irregular and uncoordinated urban growth in Maracaibo.



Illustration 2: Formal and organized urban growth.

These concerns suggest that sustainable urban development can be better achieved by the complete incorporation of the communities and their organizations by an effective process of citizenship education in which those involved can learn about their rights,

duties, and values to guide their proactive action in their own communities. Nevertheless, the violence and the insecurity require the direct and irrevocable attention of the State.

Citizenship will acquire sense and content in the framework of relations among the State institutions and these local groups; first at the community level and then followed by the implications for citizens at the urban level. In the framework of relations, as Molina (1999) has stated, three common characteristics of a modern concept of citizenship are relevant: first, the sense of belonging to a community of interests; second, the existence of a general interest that is shared; and third, the respect of diversity.

With these considerations, citizenship supposes the possibility of agreement in a pluralistic environment. It assumes the possibility of counting on active social actors and mechanisms and public institutions to regulate those interests. Second, it assumes a public space of interaction that can be complex and diverse, in which it could be possible to exercise rights and duties as well as to process the demands for new rights and, in this way, expand citizenship values. Thus, social education and reflection and action processes are important to strengthen the capacities of citizens.

This is the dynamic part of the concept from which it is possible to reflect about the actors and their power in those spaces. The existence of subjects who are conscious of their rights, active in the political and social life, and free to exercise it with reciprocity; an ideal “civic engagement” (Wilson 1997), or “active citizenship”, can guide our everyday conduct, shape our understanding of society, strengthen it and improve living conditions for every citizen. It becomes a process of realizing that all are citizens and therefore all are able to receive support as well as provide for others. This is a reason why all physical improvement projects must be accompanied with social, educational, health and recreational programs to guarantee the sustainable presence of positive impact.

Without doubt, “the transformation of residents into active subjects, owners of their own development, is what counts” (Baldo and Villanueva 1997: 154).

THE LOCAL PROBLEM AND THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Collecting these reflections, the search for a democratic and modern citizenship seems to be moved in three complementary paths: in a cultural perspective, where the tolerance, the plurality and the diversity in a democratic society are proposed as basic principles; in a social context, where the strengthening of civil society and the creation of a favorable critical mass with equality of opportunities are sought; and in a political perspective, in the constitution of a new community of interests that, under these principles, establishes the bases of a different political order (Lechner 1990, cited by Hengstenberg et al.1999).

In Maracaibo, most of the development projects carried out by government agencies have been traditionally managed with minimum or without participation of the stakeholders. Despite the fact that some regional government agencies have tried to involve the community in their development strategies as a new approach to improve the living conditions of the poor, examples are scattered and most of the time they seem to be unsuccessful in satisfying people’s own needs. Development projects do not cope with the increasing demand and lack of resources, and the centralized distribution system from Caracas usually makes the tasks difficult. Most of the time, states have to wait months and even years to have their projects approved and then wait additional time to receive the funding to implement them.

Moreover, in a highly politicized environment, community participation in neighborhood improvement projects is still a process in which a small group of communities or individuals benefits while a large portion of the population have to find solutions in the informal sector or through self-help processes. As a response to this

condition, many times local community groups organize themselves in spontaneous ways, sometimes bypassing the government as a component of their project. This attitude is the result of a political and social process in which the State has proven to be ineffective, corrupt and far from the reach of the poorest groups.

Social housing programs in the Municipality are carried out by two national, one regional and two local government agencies. The Ministry of Housing and Habitat—*Ministerio de Vivienda y Hábitat*, MINVIH—and the Foundation for the Promotion and Development of the Communal Power—*Fundación para la Promoción y Desarrollo del Poder Comunal*, FUNDACOMUN—are administered by the national government. The Zulian Housing Institute—*Instituto Zuliano de Vivienda*, INZUVI—implements the regional policies in the sector. The Municipal Housing Institute—*Instituto Municipal de la Vivienda*, IVIMA—and the Autonomous Micro-financing Service—*Servicio Autónomo Microfinanciero*, SAMI—develop and carry out the housing programs in the Municipality.

MINVIH and FUNDACOMUN exhibit a centralized and bureaucratic management model in planning and executing housing development projects. INZUVI and IVIMA exercise a more decentralized model from the national government but also implement bureaucratic projects in barrios and are not flexible enough to address effective bottom-up approaches. In SAMI, the municipality and the external actors have been able to implement a planning process in which responsibilities and duties are shared and in which the attention to the poor starts at the barrio level.

Regarding the production of housing units, MINVIH develops plans and projects for new developments to surpass the local deficit of new housing^{4,5}. FUNDACOMUN

⁴ The housing deficit in 1998 accounted for 96 thousand units (Alcaldía de Maracaibo, 2001) and 157.000 units in 2007 (Sistema Integrado de Vivienda y Hábitat - Sivih).

⁵ See Apendix B. Housing Sector Planning in Venezuela.

only offers advising to Community Councils that approaches the institution at its office. It keeps a registry of these groups but is not able to provide any kind of physical solution to the housing needs, leaving the task of negotiation and provision to the communities. INZUVI, besides carrying out new housing developments, also implements a regional *rancho*—shanty house—replacement program that replaces *ranchos* with adequate housing units and provides construction materials to solicitants. IVIMA does the same but only at the municipal level and assists communities that approach the institution. SAMI, also part of the municipal structure, carries out the Full Citizenship Program—*Programa Ciudadanía Plena*—which only intervenes in reducing the qualitative housing deficit by physically improving the already existing stock in the local barrios. In all the institutions, the legal tenure of land where dwellings are settled is an indispensable condition for the governmental to act.

Only the Full Citizenship program carries out processes of citizenship education on a constant basis. Likewise, only SAMI and the INZUVI provide technical-constructive training, advising, monitoring and control. While INZUVI carries out this kind of advising only in the design phase, the SAMI does the same throughout the dwelling production process.

In the city, changes are expected to occur, and one of them involves a more active role of community groups in more effective partnership with the local government toward community development. In Maracaibo, the Municipality—Mayor Di Martino's administration (2000-2004 and 2004-2008)—as a public institution, besides modernizing the urban cadastre, has wanted to achieve efficiency in the collection of municipal taxes and the execution of infrastructure works and social programs oriented to the communities, having as its goal the progressive improvement of the quality of life of citizens by means of promoting people's involvement and sharing efforts with non-

governmental organizations. In addition, as an incentive to increase productivity and accountability, the municipality provides training for employees (Alcaldía de Maracaibo 2000).

I felt motivated to analyze one of the Municipal government's initiatives and the proposed participatory planning processes of "Promotion of Full Citizenship" in its extensive second phase of implementation⁶. The program is a joint venture or movement to bring the low-income sector of society into the sphere of citizen participation with a revalorization of citizenship and its implication in people's attitudes, beliefs and values. With the belief that consciousness building (*concientización*) in low-income beneficiaries indicates a critical and proactive position from which to face the physical and social dimensions of poverty, the local government, two NGOs and the low-income communities have committed to participate and promote the initiative.

With the tangible improvement of low-income dwellings and local micro-enterprises, a transformation in a poor neighborhood can be perceived, promoting certain local support to the project and motivating these and other residents to participate in initiatives for their collective benefit. However, in order to plant the seeds of citizenship, local development programs should face the social and cultural realities of individuals and communities and offer the different stakeholders the opportunity to become better persons, members of their families, neighbors, and residents of the city. It is expected that participants understand the significance of participation at the local level, learn about their rights and duties, and perform better as leaders or member of their communities.

At the beginning of the research, and prior to the fieldwork in Maracaibo, I established the following hypotheses and objectives to address the many concerns I had about the local development program that was being implemented. At this point, the

⁶ The first phase, in 1999, represented a pilot experience prior to the extended implementation.

research reviews social awareness, personal and group learning, the scope of participation, and people's interest in promoting social values in local communities. At the same time, it identifies and evaluates qualitative and quantitative indicators of change that can prove the effectiveness or shortages of the program.

Hypothesis 1

The principles of empowerment and collaboration promoted in the community by the local development program contribute to accomplish its objectives and to strengthen citizenship values associated to it.

Hypothesis 2

The decision-making phase of the development plan and its successful implementation are strengthened when the development agent learns to perceive the reality, needs, and expectations of the beneficiaries.

Hypothesis 3

The effective use of citizenship education provides the beneficiaries with a more active role in decisions affecting their lives, and suggests that results of the development plan are accountable.

These preliminary questions developed over the course of the study as I followed up stakeholders' interpretation and reflection of the program. The answer to these research questions are sought by looking at the process of individual and collective transformation that can be recorded when participatory methods linked to citizen education are used in all the stages of the Promotion of Full Citizenship Program—preparation, consultation, implementation, and evaluation. While addressing these questions, I consider the social consequences of the Venezuelan political and economic

crisis at the time, which had not only affected the nation's economy but has also distorted the way people think and behave in society and the local urban conditions that characterize the case studies.

With respect to social impact, the current generation has experienced a massive process of impoverishment that has taken place in the country. The Venezuelan who lived in the "country of opportunities, growth, and an ascending social mobility... sees with stupor the accelerated social processes of disintegration, intolerance and political violence" (De Viana 1999). Without doubts, recovery depends on economic growth, but the generation of jobs and a stable income is not sufficient, or is out of all possibilities these days. It is necessary that people develop and exercise their capacities, abilities, knowledge, information and motivation, which are necessary conditions to improve the quality of life of local residents and consequently strengthen a portion of the social capital of the nation.

I believe and can affirm that the knowledge that is produced needs to be productive, and gaining it can help individuals, groups and organizations perform more successfully. In this sense, individual and organizational learning is a matter of acquiring, creating, and then disseminating knowledge that yields new and different behavior (Mai 1996). The critical ingredient is reflection: to create reason and opportunity to step back and think about the implications of a problem solving experience and to extract some useable knowledge from it (Mai 1996). Sharing findings and experiences with other members of the community, with other communities, or with the agents of development becomes a valuable tool in transforming attitudes and behavior⁷. Pattern (1981) adds the significance of understanding and accepting other people's feelings as the mutual and

⁷ This argument is not new as it has been supported by UNESCO since the 1970s (see UNESCO, 1974).

spontaneous expression and open acceptance of emotions and feelings on the part of groups or communities' members. This is the basis of the local knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS

De Viana (1999) affirms that the Venezuelan citizen is essentially urban, with practices and customs learned in the city. He or she believes that the State is inefficient, corrupt, and far from the reach of the population, specifically the urban poor. For public-private, top-down alliances to become paradigm, it becomes necessary that citizens and organizations recognize that the challenge of overcoming poverty demands more than the traditional national government policies, but larger steps to bring the state and the population closer. The opening and acceptance of society, exercised by government agents, should be based on joint responsibility. The appropriate use of instruments for monitoring and control would establish a new kind of relationship between the State and civil society, which in this case are represented by the final beneficiaries of a local development plan or program.

Citizenship education programs can prepare individuals to become clear thinking and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning their life and their societies. The argument is based on the distinction between the individual as a subject of ethics and law, entitled to all the rights inherent in the human condition, human rights; and the citizen, entitled to civil and political rights. In this way, people benefiting from a citizenship education approach can learn, systematically, that citizenship unfolds and develops in a society imbued with values and in the community as a whole. Indeed, the Promotion of Full Citizenship Program is expected to promote active citizen education and the self-recognition of values, which would enable every person to gain knowledge of the method of operation and the work of public institutions; and to participate in the cultural life of the community and in public affairs. Wherever possible, this participatory

approach should increasingly link education, dialogue, and action to solve individual and household problems, and more importantly, to transcend the sphere of individuality to intervene in collectively identified issues. Can individuals and communities take advantage of these learning opportunities? What changes can I perceive in residents of local low-income settlements and municipal agents while processes of dialogue, education, and reflection in action guide the development process? My research attempts to contribute to the understanding of the dialogue-reflection-action commitment to achieve sustainable local development.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework. The community approach in the development framework and the Venezuelan Experience.

This chapter explores the theoretical definitions of community, association and participation, and their implications in community development and the construction of citizenship. From these approaches, I refer to the trend of stakeholders and partners of development in the application of participatory methods and techniques in the project cycle of social programs, in their investigation and in the action. I also analyze the consideration of the learning and organizational development processes as a means for people to learn and reflect about their conducts and attitudes as applied to the work in the community and the reduction of poverty. At last, I review the community experience in Venezuela during the last decades and the current role of the Municipality as the privileged space for the implementation of democratic policies and participatory development strategies.

CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Citizenship is more than a subject. It represents the membership in a society or community, and often implies some responsibilities and duties. In its simplest meaning, “citizenship” refers to the status of being a “citizen”. The term is also used to identify the “involvement in public life and affairs—that is, to the behavior and actions of a citizen” (Huddleston and Kerr 2006). It is also interpreted as active citizenship, which refers to not only the rights and responsibilities laid down in the law, but also to a general form of behavior, social and moral, which societies expect of their citizens.

To be a citizen has personal and social implications that are closely tied to public behavior, to attitudes towards other people, the community and the country. To be a

citizen supposes the acceptance of a set of rules and values that individuals share with the rest of the people in a society. Likewise, it entails the expression of emotions and feelings that demonstrate the valuation and the respect of such norms. It means a commitment that is translated into collective, perceivable and permanent action and the generation of a collective capability to construct meanings, to assert values, to share practices and to innovate. A true citizen is permanently conscious of his or her commitment and roles in the community, has feelings of identity, and has a sense of belonging and adhesion to his or her community. The means to develop such a level is important, but the strategies to persuade or impose such attitudes can repress and provide the framework to punish violators of the rules and principles of citizenship. Nevertheless, those strategies directed to develop citizen's behaviors by conviction has greater value and meaning (Santana and Magro 2003).

Citizenship also presupposes social cohesion: the need to participate actively and take shared responsibility for societal problems (Sohilait 2005). Active citizenship implies working towards the betterment of one's community through economic participation, public service, volunteer work, and other such efforts to improve life for all citizens. We can perceive it as an articulation of the debate over rights versus responsibilities. It is the totality of rights and responsibilities that are associated with a multicultural political and economic community.

Community development is understood as an expression of citizenship in action. However, recognizing the relationship between both requires understanding the implications of citizenship. Citizenship, broadly speaking, represents the social and legal link between individuals and their democratic political community. The status of citizenship entails important responsibilities, rights and duties that individuals must fulfill and the interpretation of citizen's values that guide action.

If citizens of a democracy would have secure rights, they must take responsibility for them. First, they must respect the rights of others; second, they must act to defend their own rights and the rights of others against those who would abuse them; and third, they must exercise their rights in order to make democracy work. The rights to vote, to speak freely on public issues or to participate in voluntary community organizations, for example, have little or no significance in political and civic life unless citizens regularly and effectively use them.

The notion of shared citizenship requires solidarity towards democracy, involvement with the organization of society (at the local level), independence, and self-support. Citizenship is fundamentally based on the principle of reciprocity: equal rights and equal duties for all. Shared citizenship presupposes that the fabric of society is made of contributions from all citizens, with the aid of institutional services, and exchange through social organizations (Sohilait 2005:3).

Values such as solidarity, respect, tolerance, and responsibility are human ideals that indicate what should be. They respond to essential human needs. But in constant dynamism; they are modified over time. According to the theory of social action, values are ideals—beliefs that, by being in a deep level of the elements that lead the action of the individual close to his or her feelings and identity, provide great strength to his or her action. In this sense, values are subjective and depend on personal judgment, which includes a complex series of emotional and intellectual conditions that suppose decision, appraisal and action. A good citizen recognizes and practices the democratic values of freedom, equality, tolerance, and solidarity. He or she practices the dialogue and assumes critical attitudes; offering solutions targeted to contribute to the organization of the community and assumes responsibilities in the materialization of such solutions. However, this behavior is highly influenced by the economic, social, political and cultural conditions that characterize the social dynamics. The stress that a person

confronts to realize daily commitments severely affects his or her attitude towards others in the household, at work or in the street. In addition, other problems may be present, such as violence, insecurity, and personal and household problems, among others (Santana and Magro 2003). The construction or development of values tied to citizenship is not an exclusive process of a certain social institution; their contents are learned and experience in the daily life of the family, in contact with mass media, or in the different groups with which the person interacts in their communities.

One can argue that the definition of community serves to identify existing groups of individuals who happen to share a geographic proximity or administrative boundary or unit i.e. a municipality. However, the concept of community connotes a much larger interpretation. As conceived in the development discourse, it represents an organic unity tied together by social bonds, which implies sharing certain ways of doing things and a sense of social identity, of belonging, mutual obligation, and the practical exercise of values. Community, as defined by Gilchrist (2000), denotes a network of people with common interests and the expectation of mutual recognition. Accordingly, Sohila (2005:3) points out that

... the concepts of citizenship and community are closely intertwined. Combining citizenship and community means enabling the existence of social cohesion within cultural diversity and of social responsibility within individual freedom. Social cohesion is supported by responsibility and empowerment.

A real human community requires that members know and recognize each other and interact directly, conditions that do apply in small-scale societies in towns and rural communities across Latin America including the indigenous people in the Andean highlands of Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador; in the Amazonian rain forests; or in Guatemala and southeastern Mexico (Veltmeyer 2001). However, as the author points out, these

conditions are difficult to maintain or even form in the growing number of medium-sized and large urban centers and cities in which the majority and growing part of the population can be found today. In the urban context, the term “community” has an empirical reference, but it is not so easy to define and is very difficult to construct. Often, it corresponds to relations formed among individuals in particular neighborhoods⁸, where residence as opposed to work forms the basis of a sense or spirit of community. This is the “the collective consciousness” (Gilchrist 2000), which is crucial to how we interpret and integrate experiences at the local level.

The notion of community is inextricably linked to sustainability; a principle that is based on the assumption that a sustainable community requires reciprocal and reliable relationships which are based on trust, equality and the honoring of diversity, as constructed values.

Voluntary associations and patterns of collective organizing evolve in response to global and local changes. Traditional forms of organization are adapted and new ones developed. These processes of experimentation and evolution ensure that the community as a whole is able to adjust to changes in the environment and learn from its collective experience... People talking together develop a collective intelligence ... which integrates past, present and future experiences into a coherent, but flexible model of the world... (Gilchrist 2000: 150-153).

Despite this rather romantic view of community presented in the popular imagination, the actual lived experience is rarely harmonious. In reality, more often than not, relations of solidarity—even the people’s sense of community—do not define those so grouped. The elements of the broader class structure are reproduced at the community level and such communities are divided not only by class but also by class conflict. Even within an apparently stable, mature community, there will be power differentials requiring continual negotiation and debate. Assets and opportunities may not be evenly

⁸ Neighborhood is essentially a spatial construct, a place. Its scale is geared to pedestrian access (Barton 2000).

distributed within social networks and some individuals may have higher privileges and status, giving certain sections of the population an advantage in their capacity to influence events and decisions. However, the most obvious area of conflict is within the political arena, between competing ideologies and parties.

Politically speaking, Veltmeyer (2001), reviewing existing studies, also concludes that the Municipality (*Municipio*), the political-administrative unit targeted for strengthening and empowering at the local level, does not necessarily constitute a “community”, the social unit that most people belong to or identify with. There clearly are differences of ideology and conflicts between politicians, and such informal processes usually operate to the detriment of people already on the margins of society.

The development of a community is also essentially about supporting and extending opportunities for informal networking. In virtually every country, governments today aim not merely to protect their citizens, but also to ensure that even the poorest among them have access to basic services such as education, health care, shelter, and aims of development etc. Governments set up a variety of State institutions to provide these services, which are used by external support agencies as channels for projects intended to benefit low-income groups. This approach to community development does not attempt to impose solutions using the professional expertise. Rather it encourages local people, the experts in their own living environment, to define the nature of the problem and to determine, so far as possible, the solution (Veltmeyer 2001). Nevertheless, from the perspectives of the poor, there is an institutional crisis, which is mainly the cause of their limited opportunities. The poor recognize the government’s role in providing services and opportunities but they feel that their lives remain unchanged by government intervention.

Narayan (2000), an advocate from the World Bank, has indicated that the low-income groups of society confront many barriers in trying to access government services. These include bureaucratic hurdles, incomprehensive rules and regulations, the need for documents to which they do not have access, and difficulties in accessing necessary information. In many places, the poor report vast experiences with corruption as they attempt to seek health care, educate their children, claim social assistance, be paid by employers, and seek protection or justice. At the same time, it is common to see how poor people can identify particular individuals within the state apparatus as good and certain programs as useful, but these advocates and programs are not enough to pull them out of poverty (Narayan 2000). Despite negative experience, for the most part, when outsiders approach the poor, they are willing to trust and listen with the hope that something good may happen in their lives.

Concerned with the risks that can be present when external agents intervene, Schwartz and Deruyttere (1996:14) point out that dissembling the consultation in the communities and the target groups could raise expectations about the local participation in the development process. When people find out about this reality, they feel resentment and possibly. They will not be willing to participate in future projects.

Donor Institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are conscious about this problem and act in a way that attempts to guarantee the contribution and participation of beneficiaries in the projects. For example, Participatory Poverty Assessment's (PPA) findings suggest that NGOs have only limited presence while CBOs—Community Based Organizations—often function as important resources to the poor since they invest heavily and place their trust much more readily in their own organizations. The impact of institutional relationships can be positive as poor people may gain access to scarce resources; or negative as they may suffer greater insecurity,

oppression, conflict, or their needs aren't satisfied when these intervene. It is clear that there is no single institutional solution to the problem of the poor. While State institutions may have a major impact on individuals and civil society in general, individual low-income households have very little influence on the nature of the state or on provision of state services. To bring about change requires changing the strength and nature of institutional connections among the poor, civil society, and the State.

Although civil society is an integral part of the State and must exist, if not thrive, for a democratic State to flower, it lies beyond the immediate reach of the State. It is the group of households, family networks, civic and religious organizations, and communities that are bound to each other primarily by shared histories, collective memories and cultural norms of reciprocity (Friedmann 1997). These groups, non-state organizations, special interest groups and associations, such as trade unions, professional associations, higher education student groups, churches and other religious groups, in addition to the media, comprise the civil society. One of the functions of civil society is to maintain a check on the power of the State. If successful, civil society is able to balance the State's tendency to seek even greater amounts of power, and therefore, resources and opportunities.

To achieve greater equity and empowerment within a community, institutions of the state and institutions of civil society must become accountable to the poor (Narayan 2000) and work in partnership. In this sense, citizenship education is also the commitment of all the participants and institutions of society in which the person develops (Santana and Magro 2003). In fact, a major challenge in development planning is to consolidate a partnership approach, for which Tennyson (1998) provides an acceptable definition:

Partnership is a cross-sector alliance in which individuals, groups or organizations agree to work together to fulfill an obligation or undertake a specific task; share

the risks as well as the benefits; and review the relationship regularly, revising their agreement as necessary (Tennyson 1998:7).

Partnership organizations are established to meet specific objectives and undertake programs and projects in collaboration with others for the short or long-term benefit of those involved according to what it is mutually established. Partnership is thus used to refer to the involvement of a wide group of stakeholders—users of services as well as providers. It is also used to define the collaboration between public authorities and the private sector for the development of infrastructure or the provision of services. This type of partnership, mostly promoted by the World Bank since the early 1990s, is now being prescribed by politicians and donors around the world. HABITAT has a more radical definition of partnership that goes much further than mere participation. It implies joint initiatives, joint ownership and shared benefits from development programs and projects, not just the participation of one party in the initiatives of another (The Panos Institute 2000).

In the same way that benefits can be obtained, which implies a significant shift of power from the controlling government to whichever non-government groups, resident's associations, user groups, and/or other non-governmental organizations, this type of cooperative work involving different sectors, with their distinct roles, values and professional skills, can raise antagonism and distrust. To respond, effective partnership requires not just changes in procedures but also changes in mind-set, so that all partners, including external support agencies, see themselves as learners rather than experts, which would require mutual acceptance and collective learning through experience. At the community level, the big challenge for outsiders is to support the capacity for poor people to organize, mobilize resources towards priority needs, and participate in local and

national governance. In addition, as Narayan (2000) points out, to empower poor people, they must experience security and opportunity at the local level.

Abers's (1997) believes that the acceptance that State and the organized civil society should enter in partnership is taking root, which is important not only for promoting efficient policies, but also for empowering those groups that are traditionally excluded. A large part of this process is allowing and supporting joint ventures and incorporating social interests in the decision-making processes, in which parties involved acknowledge each other as equal. As a result, civil society can be recognized as a legitimate partner. We must also recognize that the rise of civil society is slowly changing political geographies and the concept has witnessed a significant revival, as Alvarez et al. (1998) affirms. It is also true that a renewed civil society, composed of new social movements, had already emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as a force mobilized against authoritarian states. This same civil society has flourished and integrated under neoliberalism (Yudice 1998) and has influenced more than a generation of popular organizations, revolutionary movements, political actors, and development NGOs (Eade 1998).

Dagnino (1998) points out how social movements do not constitute homogeneous social actors or political subjects but are characterized by heterogeneity and diversity. Civil society represents this diversity. There is room for other expressions and meanings, and for collective actors who are searching for their identities and struggling for their legitimate space in the sociopolitical scenario (Jenin 1998), i.e. the Zapatistas in Mexico (Yudice 1998) or the indigenous groups in Guatemala (Warren 1998).

Social integration, with special consideration of low-income segments of society, has become the prime characteristic of civil society in Latin America. According to Alvarez et al. (1998), it is the vitality of civil society that has become the guarantor for

the functioning of political democracy, as democracy represents the ethical principle of this social integration. Civil society constantly disputes the parameters of democracy; the very boundary of what it is properly defined as in the political arena, its participants, its institutions, its processes, its agenda, and its scope (Dagnino 1998). Citizens, as members of civil society, view democracy as the achievement of civil rights (Mac Donald 1997). Although the rights attached to citizenship have often been of little practical value to the inhabitants of the region, the use of the term “citizenship” has spread increasingly, and the symbolic dispute about its meaning has suggested the clarification of the notion of a “new citizen”. Alvarez (1998) sees the importance of this statement for the case of the poor or marginalized people, for whom the first goal of the struggle is often to demonstrate that they are people with rights, so as to recover their dignity and status as citizens and even as human beings.

In addition to the perceived heterogeneity of civil society and the rise of citizenship for people to account for their rights, a more recent postmodern perspective of Latin America offers a vision of pluri-nations and local identities. For some pluralists, the state is a more or less neutral arena whose role is to act as arbitrator among conflicting and competing interests to shape policy output with no groups being systematically discriminated against in their access to policy makers (Grindle and Thomas 1991). This vision suggests that groups of the population are no longer mass without form but increasingly self-conscious sectors of the population with the capacity for action (Dagnino 1998). According to Dagnino, this conception is not limited to legal provisions, access to previously defined rights, or the effective implementation of abstract formal rights. It includes the invention and creation of new rights, which emerge from specific struggles and their concrete practices.

Citizens are committed to expanding their rights and collective empowerment in issues such as the right for voice in democratic procedures, the right to transparency in government transactions, for accountability of the state to its citizens, the right to be heard as citizens, the right to difference (values, identities in multicultural cities); or the right to have access to the material bases of social power: housing, work, health, education, a life-sustaining environment, and financial resources, etc. (Friedmann 1997). The activities of public officials and their commitment to change are always determined by the particular way in which societal interests are organized and articulated (Grindle and Thomas 1991). This exercise is not automatic, but depends on people wanting to exercise their rights. Participation, in turn, depends on people feeling that they have reasons to participate.

These microlevel forces and their linkage to macro changes have also altered some of the bases of participation. The free market economic policies have excluded most of Latin America's population from the benefits of growth (Roberts 1995). The State still plays an important role in providing the integrative framework within which civil society operates. The latter cannot function properly without it. The arguments for decentralization are well known. In this context, participation, being one of the strong features of decentralized planning and the empowerment paradigm, is primarily required to reduce unequal distribution of power and means of production.

Decentralization has brought some gains for both governments and communities. For example, more and more municipalities are increasingly accessing resources more directly, making their own investment decisions and using community participation as an integral component of public administration⁹. However, a recent record of decentralization has exposed serious gaps. In most cases, the decentralization of

⁹ I.e., Abers (1998) studied cases of participatory budgeting in Brazil.

responsibilities has not been accompanied by the decentralization of resources. With limited local tax/revenue bases, most local governments still rely upon central government money and are hence subject to the power of the central government and its political objectives. At the same time, budgets for social development are constrained. In any case, the most affected groups are the vulnerable and the excluded.

The processes of privatization, market liberalization, subsidy elimination and public spending cuts have been redefining the relationship between State and economy, and between State and civil society (Sabatini 1997). Nevertheless, a stable relationship between the three poles has not yet been formed. It is the third pole, civil society, which suffers the most from the crisis. While the economic sector gains a certain level of independence, society is externalized in its relation with the State. Paternalist protection diminishes and the population has no choice but to accept whatever opportunities economic growth may provide. As both domestic and international actors show a general dissatisfaction with the effectiveness and capacity of central governments to implement successful economic and social development policies; mismanagement, clientelism, and corruption come to be viewed as insoluble problems of central administration.

Neoliberal policies dominated Latin American countries in the 1980s, which focused on the operation of a free market, allowing the enterprising individual to thrive through a positive reinforcing cycle. Capital entrepreneurs through the market provide the dynamic for change, which eventually leads to a total process of change (Cubitt 1995). However, neoliberalism has tended to weaken the basis for collective action and movements as well. In fact, adjustment policies and economic structuring postponed social demand and excluded social justice from the priorities of the political agenda (Jelin 1998). Moreover, a major problem with neoliberal policies was that a large segment of the population has remained outside the market, with low productivity and no saving

capacity, therefore increasing their poverty. Jelin adds that because the poor have neither socioeconomic nor political power, they do not gain admission or even access to the decision-making processes and hence are unable to influence them.

PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The exercise of participation demonstrates civil society's desire to be an active component in the decision-making of issues that definitively affect it (Buroz 1998). A definition of participatory process implies the analysis of its most relevant aspects. On one hand, there is self-determination, collaboration in the definition of the quality of life, and responsibility for local participation as implicit values. On the other hand, there are the normative concepts of economic participation, equal access to opportunities, resources, and social justice. The basic element is the active presence of each person in the decision making of society, and consequently, of the individual. This element supposes the construction of a shared vision of transformation and improvement through the promotion of social change. This significant consensus- reaching form refers to the mobilization of people and representative groups and institutions, their integration, the equitable distribution of benefits, and to the changes in the material and mental structures of members. Participation in consequence, as a historical process, implies the succession of actions in certain time and spatial locations toward visioning and transformation. Some examples of the meaning and interpretation of participation point out:

... participation includes people's involvement in decision-making processes, in implementing programs, their sharing in the benefits of development programs and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programs (Cohen and Uphoff 1977 cited in UNDP 1998).

Participation is concerned with ... the organized efforts to increase control over resources and regulate institutions in given social situations on the part of groups and movements of those hitherto excluded from such control (Pearse and Stifel 1979 cited in UNDP 1998).

Participation can be seen as a process of empowerment of the deprived and the excluded. This view is based on the recognition of differences in political and economic power among different social groups and classes. Participation in this sense necessitates the creation of organizations of the poor, which are democratic, independent and self-reliant (Ghai 1990 cited in UNDP 1998).

[Participation is] a process through which people [stakeholders, partners or beneficiaries of the projects] influence and exercise control over development initiatives, the decision-making process, and the resources that affect them ... Beneficiaries are those who are affected by the results—negative and positive—or those who affect the outcomes of an intervention (Rietbergen and Narayan 1998:4).

Participatory development stands for partnership, which is built upon the basis of dialogue among the various actors, during which the agenda is jointly set, and local views and indigenous knowledge are deliberately sought and respected. This implies negotiation rather than the dominance of an externally set project agenda. Thus, people become actors instead of being beneficiaries (OECD 1994 cited in UNDP 1998).

From an ideological point of view, the notion of community participation was inspired by a combination of populism, individualism, and anarchy. While populism links the concept with the people and democratic individualism gives birth to participatory democracy, anarchy feeds on inherently anti-state behavior, which is neither realistic nor productive (Medley 1993).

The UNDP, in its *Guide to Participation* (1998), also cites the following arguments for participation:

1. People's participation can increase the efficiency of development activities in that, by involving local resources and skills, it can make better use of expensive external costs.
2. It can increase the effectiveness of such activities by ensuring that, with people's involvement, they are based upon local knowledge and understanding of problems and will therefore be more relevant to local needs.

3. Participation helps to build local capacities and develop the abilities of local people to manage and to negotiate development activities.
4. Participation can increase coverage when local people are able to assume some of the burden of responsibility and thus help to extend the range of activities of a development activity.
5. Participation can lead to better targeting of benefits to the poorest via the identification of key stakeholders who will be most affected by the activities.
6. Crucially, participation can help to secure the sustainability of the activities as beneficiaries assume ownership and are willing to maintain its momentum.
7. Participation can often help to improve the status of women by providing the opportunity for them to play a part in development work.

The “Liveable Cities Project”¹⁰ (Creeddy and Zuidema 2007), a European initiative toward sustainable development that groups a series of educational and governmental institutions, has also promoted important added values of involvement. Table 1 contains a detailed summary of these values, from which those tied to the creation of cultural and attitudinal changes positively add to this discussion.

Cunill (1999) points out the clear unbalance between the participation associated with the policies of production and the policies of reproduction, which expresses the dichotomy that has traditionally separated the economic from the social. A challenge is thus present in what we call “the social” (*lo social*), which makes it noteworthy to link participation to the building of citizenship: to provide support to individuals that are subordinated to the economy and political power. The emphasis is in strengthening the levels of social and political self-organization and action to positively impact both

¹⁰ The Liveable Cities project is a joint effort by EUROCITIES, the Dutch government, two universities and nine local authorities. It aims to improve the quality of living environment in urban areas. www.liveablecities.org

individuals and group, in the efficiency, efficacy and sustainability of their projects. Under this perspective, projects are assumed not only as material but also as educational opportunities.

Table 1: Added values of stakeholder involvement

Involving People...	
1. Generates support	to enhance understanding, to enhance social cohesion, to reduce delays and opposition such as law suits and protests, to allow effective and efficient implementation for programs.
2. Enhances equity	to respect stakeholders opinions and interests, to enhance with those you do not hear, to enhance legitimacy and democratic values.
3. Generates ideas and creativity	to connect different and diverging ideas and perspective, to use individual expertise and creativity, to enhance the robustness of solutions and strategies, to enhance mutual learning.
4. Creates mutual commitment for action	to enhance transparency and accountability, to create social pressure to deliver.
5. Helps to build institutional capital	to create networks, to build trust, to lower thresholds and open arenas, to get people "on board".
6. Helps to create cultural and attitude changes	to raise public knowledge and awareness, to let people see the consequences of their actions, to distribute responsibility to all.

Source: Creedly and Zuidema 2007: 23.

The potential benefits of participation have been discussed in relation to the specific interests of each stakeholder. People participate in response to some perceived interest and remain involved as long as that interest persists (Sanoff 2000). Participation as a management tool entails a series of techniques and participatory instruments. Once it

is exercised as a methodological process it becomes a natural mechanism of action. However, the failure or success of maintaining people's involvement will depend on the way participatory approaches are conceived, implemented, and evaluated.

In addition to the possible benefits of participation, the UNDP's *Guidebook on Participation* (1998) also highlights some arguments against it:

- As any process of socioeconomic development ... participation costs time and money and can be a process with no guaranteed impact upon the end product.
- Processes of participation are irrelevant and a luxury in situations of poverty and it will be hard to justify expenditure on such a process where people need to be fed and their livelihoods secured.
- Participation can be a destabilizing force in that it can unbalance existing socio-political relationships and threaten the continuity of development work.
- Participation is driven by "ideological fervor" and is less concerned with seeking to secure direct benefits for people from development activities than with promoting an ideological perspective into development.
- Participation can result in the shifting of the burden onto the poor and the relinquishing by national governments of their responsibilities to promote development with equity.
- Those who make the decisions should want to consolidate their power in the projects and programs to control any personal or political opportunity.

Moreover, participation can be threatening to professionals and managers who feel that it threatens their role as experts since it implies shifting decision control to users. Crackwell (2000) contributes to the critical analysis and adds to these statements other important considerations. First, he points out the lack of commitment on the part of

development partner institutions and support organizations, a condition that can contribute to failure and to the possibility that participatory approaches fall as they become victims of external pressure. A second consideration refers to the donor agencies that have excessive expectations in obtaining fast results, the centralized and bureaucratic decision-making procedures and the technocratic systems of monitoring and evaluation of participation, which is often controlled by the administration of the project. Third, the pressure to achieve the objectives established within a predetermined period can interfere with the ability of the group to internalize and recognize the development process as their own.

THE USE OF PARTICIPATORY METHODS AND TECHNIQUES IN DEVELOPMENT

The movement towards a closer involvement of the stakeholders in inquiry and action has grown out of the unsatisfactory experiences of assessments and evaluations of social development projects and programs (Mosley 1984; Baulch 1995 cited in Crackwell 2000)¹¹, using conventional approaches (measures of income vs. sense of well-being), as many projects have failed because the so-called beneficiaries have not truly participated in the assessment of needs and the identification of problems to be addressed by such efforts. In such experiences, people were thus regarded as mere recipients rather than the actual creators of change and progress, which consequently resulted in incomplete and inaccurate analysis of the problem, incomplete and inaccurate identification of solutions (SADC 1998), and untrustworthy, biased knowledge. As a consequence, there has been a rapid expansion of new participatory strategies and approaches in the context of sustainable development, which are used in less developed countries in the formation and implementation of self-help projects, in the production and exchange of products between the urban poor, the organization of communities, the provision of community housing

¹¹ Based on Mosley's studies in Peru, 1984; Baulch's studies in Rajasthan, 1995 (cited in Crackwell 2000).

and services, etc. (Veltmeyer 2001). These strategies have drawn on many well-established traditions that have put participation, action research, dialogue, reflection, and the education of people at the forefront of attempts to emancipate disempowered groups (Pretty et al. 1995). A growing family of participatory methods and techniques¹² are continuously developed and put into practice in different settings and under specific circumstances to facilitate project formulation and implementation, and to generate knowledge using people's own expertise. It is not just for local people to inform outsiders but also for people's own analysis of their conditions.

Much of empowerment literature focuses on participatory empowering strategies that lead to outcomes as ends in themselves, yet they are also intermediate steps to health and development outcomes. Most of the literature on empowerment outcomes centers on psychological empowerment, measured by collective efficacy (the belief that people together can make a difference), outcome efficacy (the belief that one's actions can produce results), political efficacy (the belief that one can influence the political process, organizations and communities), critical thinking ability and participatory behavior (WHO Europe 2006).

Multilateral agencies have demanded the existence of processes of participation and public consultation in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and further evaluation of development projects to be financed. However, more importantly, including people from the beginning can help to build trust and loyalty in the development project. A growing number of studies have demonstrated that the incorporation of the poor in the design and execution of development projects helps not only to produce more appropriate projects, but also ensures that these projects are better focused in order to benefit those who are most in need (Narayan 1995). Moreover, the incorporation of the poor from the beginning helps to build people's confidence and identification with the development

¹² Participatory reflection and action, applied social anthropology, system analysis and research, participatory action research, etc.

project. In this sense, Buroz (1998) outlines the following characteristics, as stated by the World Bank, to highlight the need to carry on participatory processes:

- Consultation with the persons or groups that are directly or indirectly involved and will be directly affected by the project, which should begin in the earliest phases of the process.
- Intervention with the persons that, because of their worry or expertise, may have appropriate information about the nature, reach and details of the potential effects.
- Willingness of participation from other sectors—educators, religious groups, human rights groups, and groups who fight against poverty.
- Measurement of the degree in which the groups will be affected and the kind of knowledge that can contribute to the evaluation.

People will join if they feel that change can or will occur. Without guidance, community groups may respond only to crises and may not achieve the goals that originally united them. Therefore, the management of participatory efforts is important. The professional's role is to facilitate the citizen group's ability to reach decisions about the environment through an easily understood process. Facilitation is a means of bringing people together to determine what they wish to accomplish and helping them find the ways to work together to do it (Sanoff 2000).

Facilitation also includes the use of a variety of participatory techniques whereby people not professionally trained can organize themselves to create a change (Sanoff 2000). Such participatory approaches have evolved from several sources and traditions. I considered five of them, which are particularly important, from "The Participatory Learning and Action Sourcebook" (Pretty et al 1995:55):

1. Activist participatory research

Inspired by Paulo Freire (1968), who is known for developing popular education, this approach held that dialoged communication allowed students and teachers to learn from one another in an environment characterized by respect and equality. A great advocate for oppressed peoples, Freire was concerned with praxis—action that is informed and linked to people’s values. Dialoged pedagogy was not only about deepening understanding; it was also about making positive changes in the world. This approach also uses dialogue and joint research to enhance people’s awareness and confidence and to empower them to take action. Its major contributions to the current approaches lie in its recognition that poor people are creative and capable and should be empowered, while outsiders have a role as catalyst and facilitator.

2. Rapid rural appraisal

In the late 1970s, RRA was a reaction to the general dissatisfaction with the biases in the external technical approach to rural development, which tended to hide the worst poverty and deprivation. It encompasses participatory approaches and methods that emphasize local knowledge and enable local people to make their own appraisals, analysis, and plans. It uses group animation and exercises to facilitate information sharing, analysis, and action among stakeholders. Although originally developed for use in rural areas, PRA has been employed successfully in a variety of settings. The approach has enabled outsiders to gain insight and information from rural people about rural conditions in a cost effective and timely manner.

3. Agro ecosystem analysis

Developed by Gordon Conway and his colleagues (1989), this approach draws on systems and ecological thinking, combining the analysis of systems—productivity, stability, sustainability and equity—with pattern analysis of space, time, flows,

relationships, relative values and decisions. Contributions of this method to current approaches are in its use of transects, informal mapping and diagramming and the use of scoring and ranking to assess innovations.

4. Field research on farming systems

This approach uncovered the rationality of small and poor farmers and their activities as experimenters. Farmers' participation in agricultural research therefore became a focus in complex and diverse systems.

5. Applied anthropology

It became recognized in the 1980s as a legitimate and useful activity, especially in its ability to help development professionals to better appreciate the richness and validity of people's knowledge. It emphasizes the benefits of participant observation and conversations and the importance of attitudes, behavior and relationships.

These approaches represent a significant departure from the standard practices of governments and non-governmental institutions. The interactive involvement of many people in different institutional contexts has promoted this kind of innovation and there are many variations in the way that systems of interaction have been put together. Despite the different ways in which participatory approaches are used, most share common principles.

A first principle is the emphasis on multidisciplinary teams of participants and multiple perspectives. With the recognition that everyone is different and important, the central objective is to seek diversity rather than characterize complexity in terms of average values. The assumption is that different individuals and groups make different evaluations of situations which lead to different actions. By working as a group, team members can evaluate a situation from different perspectives, carefully monitor each other's work, and carry out several tasks simultaneously. In this sense, groups can be

powerful and productive when they function well. The performance and output of the team is likely to be greater than the sum of the individual members (Pretty et al. 1995).

The second principle focuses on the application of a defined methodology and a systemic learning process, which emphasizes cumulative learning by all the participants, and is able to include both the professional facilitator and the local people. It involves the recognition that the complexity of a situation will only be revealed through group analysis and learning processes. Development institutions have concluded that when participatory techniques shift the normal mood and facilitate new, common learning, they succeed in sharing information freely and broadly, drawing on the inherent possibilities of collaboration among stakeholders and bringing forth consensus. Groups generally produce fewer ideas than individuals working separately. However, they do produce better ideas. They are discussed more carefully (Pretty et al. 1995).

The third common principle of participatory methodologies is concerned with the transformation of existing activities to try to improve people's situation. The role of the external expert is to help or facilitate people in carrying out their own study and therefore achieve some outcome. According to Hage and Finsterbusch (1987), poor people will move fast in response to a participatory stimulus, producing participatory plans on demand. In the fields of architecture and planning, participation has been progressively accepted as "a management model to achieve a model of habitat, an alternative tool for solving problems associated to the places in which humans live" (Maffrand and Martinez 2001).

Pretty et al. (1995) point out a fourth principle, which supports the idea that the participatory process leads to debate about change—physical, social, economic—and that debate changes the perception of participants. This affirmation suggests that a process of joint analysis and dialogue helps to define changes, which would bring about

improvement and seeks to motivate people to take action to implement the defined changes.

A fifth and final principle relates to the specific context in which the methodologies are applied. These should be flexible enough to be adapted to suit each new set of conditions and actors, and so there are multiple variants of participatory strategies. The debate emerges over the question of the applicability of theories and techniques to direct community development in different cultural environments because, in reality, local communities can be a heterogeneous group—with differences in wealth, status, gender, ethnicity, race or education—and can therefore direct the desires and aspirations of each group in distinct ways. In this sense, Hage and Finsterbusch (1987) confirm how the dynamics of organizational change are valid across a wide range of cultures. Brinkerhoff (1991) supports the same statement while looking at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID¹³) Performance Management Project. However, conflict is inevitable when working with groups of people who have different interests, backgrounds and experiences.

Emphasizing on project cycle¹⁴ management¹⁵, Crackwell (2000) affirms that unless a project has been well conceived in the first place, with clear objectives, criteria for success and some assessment of the likely risks involved, it is likely to run into problems during implementation and will be difficult to evaluate. Here is where techniques and methods of participation have helped. They enable local people to share, enhance and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions and act in four senses: to participate in decision-making, to participate in implementation, to participate in

¹³ USAID is the government agency providing US economic and humanitarian assistance worldwide. It supports long-term and equitable economic growth and advances U.S. foreign policy objectives by supporting economic growth, agriculture and trade; global health; and, democracy, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance.

¹⁴ The concept of project cycle was first developed by the World Bank in 1970 (Cracknell 2000, 95).

¹⁵ USAID introduced the concept of project cycle management in the 1970s, known as the logical framework (Cracknell 2000, 101).

monitoring and evaluation, and to share the benefits of development (Mishra et al. 1984, 91).

Development practitioners can apply methods of consultation in the identification of concerns, needs and priorities of local groups in the first stage of the planning cycle. In most cases, meaningful participation demands the involvement of the subjects in specifying and prioritizing needs and decision-making, then participating on equal footing in the fashioning of plans and actions to meet the needs specified. Kaplan (1996), in his studies of organizational development in South Africa, points out that self-reflection and questioning, in both individual and community situations, leads to a new kind of power: the power of consciousness and the capacity to make decisions with maximum awareness. He also affirms that the new role of the development practitioner is to facilitate the consciousness of individuals and communities through the medium of people's organizations¹⁶. Blackburn and Chambers (1998) add that local people need to be involved right from the beginning, even before project formulation.

The identification of what kind of incentives and sources of motivation, both positive and negative, which operate in a group, becomes possible by looking at the human resources context through the action of people (Mai 1996). Social analysis helps to determine if all the groups express their points of view and if techniques such as stakeholder analysis, institutional mapping, and participatory rural assessments (PRA¹⁷), among others, can be used for the purpose of planning. The role of outsiders is not to persuade, dominate or lecture, but to motivate, facilitate the dialogue and share the methods which local people can use for their own appraisal, analysis, planning, and action. Here, the professional, as technical expert, planner or manager, should take part in

¹⁶ The approach is based on a shift from issues related to aid delivery towards issues of impact on the beneficiaries (Crackwell 2000), and from production-centered to people-centered (Bergdall 1993).

¹⁷ Framework developed and promoted by the World Bank (see World Bank 1996).

a broader task as facilitator, enabler, communicator, participant or team member. Hence, the definition of issues, uses of resources, and priorities are made through a shared responsibility with the beneficiaries.

The professional's job is no longer to produce finished and unchangeable solutions, but to develop solutions from a continuous dialogue with those who will use his or her work. The energy and imagination of the professional are directed to raising the citizen's level of awareness in the discussion. The solution will come out of the exchanges between two; the professional states opinions, provides technical information, and discusses consequences of various alternatives, just as citizens state their opinions and contribute their expertise (Sanoff 2000, 12).

Thus, relying on its own social dynamic, the design of the project ensures its own quality. Perhaps some obstacle may contribute to failures. For example, decision-makers may desire to keep the power of decision-making about the projects and programs to themselves. While participation continues to remain the central theme in the design of projects, Vettivel (1992) finds out how decision-makers make it a peripheral activity at the time of actual planning and decisive actions. This kind of behavior makes the training of staff a key element in the promotion of participatory forms of development.

By allowing local-level authorities some degree of autonomy in decision-making, through popular influence on public decision-making, the pattern of resource allocation and utilization can be re-oriented more towards the felt needs and aspirations of local communities (Majares 1985). Concerning the implication for social groups, Schneiderman (cited in Rothman et al. 1976) demonstrates in his study of farmer's organizations that low-income persons showed more interest in participating in activities that had direct and immediate benefits than in long-term activities with long-range payoffs.

During the implementation phase of projects, consultation and community participation gets more intense because beneficiaries are more interested in trying to

ensure that on-going projects are being implemented successfully. It becomes essential to continuously track the different inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes (Hauge 2001), although people usually focus more on project monitoring and mid-term evaluation than on post-evaluation. In addition, lower-class individuals have a more present-time orientation as compared to middle-class people who have a more future-time orientation (Crackwell 2000).

Monitoring acts simultaneously can be an on-going management tool as well as a basic data collection system for evaluation where the whole process can rely on participatory methods. Training beneficiaries to act in this stage of the cycle helps them to keep their own records and provide additional input for the improvement of the project's design and implementation. Holding monitoring meetings and using charts, diagramming, mapping, and other visual techniques can facilitate ongoing monitoring. However, the failure to monitor and evaluate outcomes may mean that mistakes are not seen and that they can repeat. It is essential to measure the overall effectiveness of the program at the end of its implementation so that the errors that have been identified are not repeated and are corrected in subsequent phases.

Crackwell, studying the evaluation phase of development programs, identifies two main purposes of conducting evaluation: to assess the outcomes and impacts of projects and to compare these with the objectives as set out originally. The author corroborates the shift towards the use of participatory methods to establish what the social-economic circumstances of the target population were before and after the project started and to specifically monitor the impacts on those groups as projects were implemented. He emphasizes the impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries and the choice of appropriate indicators for the evaluation. At least the beneficiaries should choose some of the indicators, which, for the most part, will be specific to the project and are just as

likely to be quantitative as qualitative. In this way, participatory monitoring and evaluation becomes part of an institution and capacity-building process. Experiences have shown at least two advantages. First, results are more complete because they are based on a comparison of several interpretations of the information gathered. Second, their impact may provoke quick and broad reasons to improve the activities concerned (Schneider and Libercier 1995). However, the most successful result is the capacity and willingness of beneficiaries to follow up on the project and assume ownership after external assistance leaves.

Knowledge needs to be productive. This statement provides the basis of organizational learning as an opportunity to acquire, create, and then disseminate knowledge that yields new and different behavior (Mai 1996). Gaining knowledge can also help an organization perform more successfully. Sharing the findings and experiences with the community, other communities, or other institutions becomes a valuable tool in transforming people's attitudes and behavior. Having the chance to step back and think about the implications of a problem-solving experience and to extract some useable knowledge from it provides an opportunity for reflection. Lessons that can be learned and shared with others can facilitate future project designs and improve implementation.

The awareness about methods and mechanisms of participation also consists of the type of organization to be created, the methods of running the organization, the information and knowledge required for the activities, the leadership skills, and the mobilization of resources (Kaplan 1996). The effectiveness of certain instruments—surveys, interviews, meetings, workshops, campaign groups, local newspapers, etc.—will depend upon the viability of issues that are being taken up, internal democracy in the group formation process, and transparency in dealing with community concerns.

The lack of commitment on the part of partner institutions and supporting service organizations can contribute to failures. Participatory approaches have often fallen victim to the outside pressures they have to contend with. These include donor agencies having excessive expectations of quick results, centralized bureaucratic decision-making procedures and technocratic monitoring and evaluation systems that are often controlled by the project management (Crackwell 2000). Participation costs time and money; it is essentially a process with no guaranteed impact upon the final product (UNDP 1998). In addition, the pressure to achieve set targets within a given period of time can interfere with the group's ability to internalize the process and recognize them accordingly.

Processes of participation seem to be irrelevant and a luxury in situations of poverty and it can be hard to justify expenditures on such a process when people need to be fed and their livelihoods secure. Moreover, participation can be a destabilizing force in that it can unbalance existing socio-political relationships.

ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACHES APPLIED TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Since at least 1960, the reference to organizational development (OD) is a general consideration of how work is done, what the people who carry out the work believe and feel about their efficiency and effectiveness rather than a specific, concrete, step-by-step linear procedure for accomplishing something (Burke 1994). Organizational development approaches apply to work with governments, non-governmental organizations as well as other civil society and community organizations and sees an entity, an organization, or a set of organizations as the key to development. It focuses on identifying and developing the elements or components of capacity within an organization, such as skills, systems, leadership, etc. that can change individual and group capacities into organizational results.

The ability to build collaborative relationships is regarded as the basis for future community and organizational success. In an era of organizational complexity and change, maintaining organizational health relies on cooperation and collaboration across and within organizations. Concerning this topic, the OD literature has grown as a mixture of open and closed systems approaches. From an open-systems point of view, the literature discusses the organization's relationship to the external environment: institutions, social, political and economic values. From a closed-systems perspective, OD focuses on the internal working of the organization. Following these considerations, many organizations both small and large are paying attention to the organizational learning cycle and the inner development it rests on to generate authentic empowered participation (Wilson 1997). People who are identified with the field of organizational development support this assumption and consistently advocate involving people in decisions that directly affect them and using more flexible ways of communicating and conducting work, which facilitates networking activities (Lusthaus et al. 1999).

More recently, the field of development has made use of the term Capacity Development (CD). During the 1980s, 1990s and in the 21st century it has become the central purpose of technical cooperation. The systems approach provides a multidimensional interpretation of CD: a complex intervention that encompasses multiple levels and actors, power relationships and linkages (Lusthaus et al. 1999). Bolger (2000) defines CD as the approaches, strategies and methodologies used by developing country, and/or external stakeholders to improve performance at the individual, organizational, network/sector or broader system level. Here, society is viewed as a multilevel, holistic, and interrelated system in which each part is linked to another. Thus, it approaches capacity development as being fundamentally about change and transformation.

Bolger also explains how this systemic approach suggests four levels of capacity (the individual, the organizational, the network/ sector and the enabling environment) and stresses the need to be cognizant of, and responsive to, the relationships among them. But more important, the systems approach suggests that CD should build on what exists in order to improve it rather than to build new systems (Lusthaus et al. 1999). Due to the importance of people in this approach, the focus of change is the individual. Here, individual change is typically a consequence of system change (Pattern 1981). Organizational development recognizes the importance of the organization but seeks to encourage people to determine its nature and structure (Kaplan 1996) as well as their own capabilities and skills (Rehman and Rehman 1998). Looking at teambuilding strategies, Pattern added to social development the significance of understanding and accepting the feelings of the members of a group as the mutual and spontaneous expression and open acceptance of emotions and feelings on the part of groups' members. Among the identifiable advantages of this approach are that it is comprehensive and flexible. It emphasizes linkages and recognizes processes and uses a broad conceptual and theoretical framework. Perhaps the most important asset of groups, according to Hage and Finsterbusch's perspective (1987), is their ability to solve problems.

Equity, sustainability, productivity and empowerment are essential components of social and organizational development. a) Equity; if development is to enlarge people's choice, people must enjoy equitable access to opportunities, b) Sustainability in the use of resources, c) Productivity; providing the opportunity for economic growth, and d) Empowerment focusing on development by the people and decentralized planning (Rehman and Rehman 1998). This last consideration about empowerment represents the process of achieving power by increasing social-political control, and the resulting capability to take independent action and increased control over decision-making and the

actions that follow. Organizational development then becomes a process of generating people's power (Mato 1999).

While an organization or an event can offer an environment that supports learning, only individuals, indeed, learn (Tennyson 1998). In fact, learning is a highly individualized process that, according to Tennyson, depends on three factors: personal capacity, willingness, and availability of opportunities. The capacity for learning grows with exposure to new methods, as well as by sensitive attempts to locate the causes of any reticence or resistance. The willingness to learn increases when benefits are personalized, clearly articulated, and understood. Tennyson also points out that if appropriate opportunities for learning are not necessarily obvious to people, it becomes necessary to show or make them available. Although building capacity for participatory development necessarily involves a range of entry points and approaches, Lusthaus et al. (1999) concludes that little consideration is given to the stages of development people go through as they learn how to be more participatory or empowered.

The concept of organizational learning represents the application of participatory action research to the dynamics of a group, organization, or community itself (Wilson 1997). Already in the 1960s and 1970s, Paulo Freire, in his liberation writings, was centered upon a transformed consciousness but was devoted to empowering the oppressed by a variety of methods including self-directed, appropriate education. Freire placed a strong emphasis on dialogue and deliberation. His principal concern lied with the social transformation by educating both the oppressor and the oppressed through critical self-reflection. Popular education, as the movement was generally called, argued that through a combination of practice and reflection, the poor could learn to analyze the world around them collectively, unmask the structures of power that oppressed them, and devise strategies for creating a more just society. Although popular education was

unevenly applied, and often symbolic participation masked real top-down decision-making, it had a powerful effect on the way civic organizations, segments of the Catholic Church, and the left thought about politics (Selee 2003). Nevertheless, Freire attempted to break down the theory-practice dichotomy and proposed a methodological framework based on learning and education that would locate both the production and communication of knowledge in the same process (Gajardo 1985). This framework promoted further inquiry to develop techniques and methods to create knowledge and transform at the same time. But how can we act based on our reality and allow its transformation without knowing it? How do we understand the problems of our community? This usually becomes a research problem.

Learning is not usually an outcome of formal teaching; instead, it comes from a process of self-development through experience. The understanding of reality has various objectives including the creation of knowledge, training and practical formation in participation, etc. Action-learning and experience-sharing are valuable tools for transforming attitudes and behavior as well as encouraging innovative approaches to research and project design and implementation. According to Tennyson (1998), all learning and sharing programs should be designed to be “transformational”, so people can then apply what they learn to change their behavior and attitudes about themselves and others, acknowledge their beliefs, influence their lives positively, modify the institutional context in which they work, and initiate more participatory processes and procedures in their families, works and communities. This combination of individual responsibility with collective decision making demands an atmosphere of trust. Trust is developed essentially through interpersonal interaction that provides a basis for dealing effectively with change (Sanoff 2000).

Mai (1996) applies the term action-learning to learning through problem solving, usually in small groups or teams, and proposes three strategies in particular; first, involvement through teams; second, information sharing, knowledge dissemination and education; and third, recognition and acceptance. Mai also points out some of the barriers to organizational learning, including the resistance to, or avoidance of activities with learning potential, passivity, and the fear of punishment (Mai 1996, 31-35).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Sustainable community development supports the argument that the best ideas usually come from the people and not necessarily from policy makers or government officials. International donors have consistently advocated the argument that active community participation is necessary to guide the process. Such indications can only suggest the perceived heterogeneity of civil society and the rise of citizenship.

The enlargement of the definition of citizenship raises a number of challenges in educating citizens. The purpose of citizenship education is “not the pursuit and acquisition of truth”, but rather the formation of individuals. It aims at imparting the knowledge and skills that we need for effective participation in the community, government, and politics. In this sense, citizenship refers to an educational activity, a process of helping people learn how to become active, informed and responsible citizens. According to the Citizenship Foundation¹⁸, Citizenship, is also known as citizenship education or education for citizenship. It encompasses all forms of education, from informal education in the home or the community or through education provided in schools, universities, training organizations or the workplace.

The principal justification for citizenship education derives from the nature of democracy. Democracies need active, informed and responsible citizens—citizens who

¹⁸ www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/

are willing and able to take responsibility for themselves and their communities and contribute to support the local development process. Consequently, citizenship education can be defined as educating people to become clear thinking and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning society. Citizenship education is also based on the distinction between the individual as a subject of ethics and law, entitled to all the rights inherent in the human condition (human rights and needs); and the citizen, entitled to recognized civil and political rights.

It has been assumed that citizen education projects should be based on the assumption that theoretical knowledge is a guide for action and not an assembly of empty speculations. Citizenship education involves a wide range of different elements of learning, including (The Citizenship Foundation 2006: 8):

1. Knowledge and understanding: e.g. about topics such as laws and rules, the democratic process, the media, human rights, diversity, money and the economy, sustainable development and the world as a global community; and about concepts, such as democracy, justice, equality, freedom, authority and the rule of law;
2. Skills and aptitudes: e.g. critical thinking, analyzing information, expressing opinions, taking part in discussions and debates, negotiating, conflict resolution and participating in community action;
3. Values and dispositions: e.g. respect for justice, democracy and the rule of law, openness, tolerance, courage to defend a point of view, and a willingness to listen to, work with and stand up for others.

All forms of citizenship education are not dogmatic principles. Citizenship education has three objectives, understanding of the principles and institutions, learning to exercise one's judgment and critical faculty, and acquiring a sense of individual and community responsibilities. In order to achieve it, citizenship education needs to be

taught in ways that bring out the ever-constant link between knowledge and practice. Hence the knowledge used for the education of the community is not merely transmitted, nor is it acquired passively by members of the group. In this type of education, it is expected that the interaction among participants, the educators (known as facilitators in the development framework), and the elements of the social reality in which they seek to undertake transformation, generate knowledge (Di Pace and Caride 1997). This can be achieved if a creative and critical vision of the social practice is reached and if participants acquire a capacity for thinking and can guide the actions for the benefit of the group.

The interaction between concepts and action gradually produces the ability to think in terms of values and refer to them. Values are universal when they concern human rights: liberty, dignity, solidarity, and tolerance. People benefiting in this way from citizenship education learn, gradually, that citizenship unfolds and develops in a society imbued with values and in the human community as a whole. These initial understandings and commitments need to be engaged through teaching and learning, which can then provide spaces for reflection, development, change, adaptation and action in the light of new learning.

The learner is engaged as a whole person, with history, hopes, relationships, feelings, dispositions, awareness as well as the ability to think. These broader aspects of being a person are essential to the process of citizenship education. Thus, the pedagogy of citizenship requires the active development of higher order thinking skills, such as critical thinking, creative thinking, and systems thinking.

WHAT THE NATIONAL EXPERIENCE CAN TELL: SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN VENEZUELA.

Ramos (1995) states that the social movements in Venezuela are not adapted to the image and predominant model in Latin America. They have not emerged as the

resistance to dictatorial states. They have not had an important indigenous component, and their engagement with the popular and community context has had a limited influence. The best-known social movement in the country, the neighbors group, has been associated with the middle class population, symbolizing the representation of interests with the defensive content of these groups in society. Ramos adds that the social movements with greater impact in Venezuela do not apparently fit into the equivalent social movement scheme of the social actor generator of change, but would be more easily identified with interest groups. This does not necessarily mean that the debate has been around the neighborhood movement (*movimiento vecinal*) all along. Other movements constitute the mature society; in the last years, the feminist movements, the cooperatives, the environmental groups, the universities, the community groups, etc., the civil society in deed.

Brief History of Community Participation in Venezuela

Community participation in Venezuela was present at the same time the process of urbanization took place. Already in the 1930s, shantytowns had developed in urban centers as a result of illegal land occupations where settlers organized against their eviction and demanded necessary infrastructure (Diaz 2000).

The dominant and repressive dictatorship of Marcos Perez Jimenez characterized the 1950s. Perez Jimenez developed large infrastructure projects as part of a national development strategy, which stimulated a significant rural-urban migration. This internal migration made it necessary to build large housing complexes to accommodate the new urban residents, a process in which people's participation was not considered. The regime was finally overthrown in 1958. That same year, the new "democratic rulers" designed a National Emergency Plan to generate income for the barrios population and to attend the urgencies associated with the still prevailing rural-to-urban migration. As a political

strategy associated with the plan, the State carried out a populist urban policy which assisted in the construction of ranchos and promoted new settlements (Hurtado 1991). In these endeavors, the population did not participate either in the elaboration or in the direct execution of the plan. In 1959, despite a non-inclusive beginning of democracy, a new Development Program, put into practice under President Betancourt's government, allowed communities to contribute to the solution of their problems through participatory processes. However, these attempts remained under the control of government institutions and not the community.

During the 1960s, the job of the community as a concrete activity extended in Latin America in the form of self-help. The movements for religious renovation, which gave support to the "Christian-based communities", helped to reduce the inertia of the traditional structures and promoted local associations. The idea was to act together in agreement with the poor. Nevertheless, neighborhood organizations in Venezuela mainly had a regenerating character but were frequently manipulated by the new political parties in power. The political repression and the constant effort to reduce the leftist groups (the so-called communist and socialist guerrilla), in the name of democracy, mainly guided government housing and neighborhoods improvement programs.

Development was conceived not as a formula to improve the community but as an instrument for national development. That is to say, it tried to integrate vertically the communities in the national plan (Hurtado 1991). ORDEC, a Governmental Community Development Agency, began to coordinate the activities of the government and tried to gain the participation of the population in the execution of programs, while FUNDACOMUN, another government agency, contributed to the financing and support of regional and local community development projects. Starting in 1965, community and

neighborhood improvement groups were created, essentially organized for the physical rehabilitation of barrios.

Despite the fact that the country went through a period of oil bonanza, problems during the 1960s usually involved the same aspects that stimulated the population during the previous decade: illegal land tenure, lack of housing and services, or insecurity. A myth of richness appeared among the barrios' inhabitants. The amount of money that suddenly was in the hands of the state allowed it to increase the dependency of, and control over, the barrios by sponsoring political parties' clientelism and paternalistic measures. The already existing community associations remained highly dependent on the political parties. Neighborhood associations increased in number and emerged as new actors. The scale and style of their actions became "social movements." The term "social" was substituted by "popular" to cover a diverse spectrum of new social actors (those without housing, without land, etc). These movements represented the intention of a few individuals affected by common problems (residents of the same area) working without a well-defined organizational structure.

Rafael Caldera's government (1968-1973) promoted popular participation under the basis of strengthening the democratic system and participatory democracy. President Carlos A. Perez (1973-1978) emphasized the need for a growing degree of participation from the distinct social groups (Diaz 2000, citing Giordani 1986). In both cases, the development of the community was usually associated with its physical improvement. Main areas of participation were in the political arena and cultural and sports activities. FUNDACOMUN assumed the coordination of the reorganization of areas occupied by poor neighborhoods and its promotion among their inhabitants. The government applied diverse promotion techniques but the groups, organized to integrate the community, did not follow their objectives (Hurtado 1991) but those imposed by the government. With

the nationalization of the oil industry in 1973, a large amount of money was suddenly in the hands of the state, which allowed the government to perpetuate the dependency model of control over the neighborhoods through paternalistic measures, clientelism and the influence of the political parties. From 1978 to 1983, during President Luis Herrera's term, the creation of community groups with greater control over decisions than before was promoted throughout the country, although these groups remained highly dependent on the political parties and were associated with political will (Diaz 2000).

In the 1980s, as consequence of the economic crisis in the region and the measures imposed by the International Monetary Fund, the country faced social, economic and political problems. With an increasing urban population, urban poverty likewise increased as an effect of the crisis. While cities faced high internal percentages of growth and densification (especially in the capital city), violence and deterioration of services also increased (Grohmann 1996). As a consequence, the institutions of the state lost credibility. The network of organizations in the barrios and the city and their built relationships formed during the 1970s deteriorated at the beginning of the 1980s. The groups were more dedicated to independent work to ensure their subsistence. Increasing unemployment and cost of living implied individual survival strategies. Social problems such as violence, drug consumption, and lack of police enforcement reduced attendance at town meetings, therefore reducing participation and stimulating their seclusion. Despite these problems, a revival of the term "social" was again applied to the concept of participation because the movements covered a variety of actors. The middle class predominantly formed most neighborhood associations; women, groups of families, students, and environmentalists, among others, started questioning the trend of development and its effect on living conditions (Pulido 1997).

The process of decentralization initiated in 1989 has been a permanent concern of several social actors, minority parties, intellectuals, economic groups, and civic associations that have pushed for the reform of the state as a means to increase democratization. This social pressure has been a natural reaction against a regime in which political parties have pervasively controlled its most important spheres of social life. It has opened an entirely new chapter in the distribution of social responsibilities among distinct levels of government and has made improving local administration an urgent priority (Navarro 1998). For the first time, in 1992, Governors and city mayors were elected democratically as a response to the necessity for municipal and regional governments to increase the availability of public services in answer to citizen's demands and to gain credibility among the electorate. Despite the fact that neighborhood associations were more and more independent, they remained controlled by the state through their legalization and necessary registration. This is a condition that still prevails.

In the 1980s, government officials finally recognized the existence of a non-reversible number of low-income illegal developments whose solutions had to be implemented *in situ*. President Jaime Lusinchi (1983-1988) considered that the processes of participation needed to be promoted. Nevertheless, the organization of the community was not considered as a social development strategy. The nature and scope of participation was not yet precise. As consequence, the 1987 Urban Planning Law (*Ley de Ordenación Urbanístico*) attempted to establish the capacity of every person or organization in the community to demand fulfillment of urban plans.

The acceleration of the crisis altered the attitude toward personal economic problems (Grohmann 1996). Until this moment, the population tried to solve their own problems individually. However, starting in 1989, collective action in response to

problems began to rise in the form of more organized cooperatives, community associations, and other forms of independent organizations.

At the same time, more responsibilities were shifted to private and non-profit organizations. In this process, a good portion of the programs were left out of reach of the political parties. The new social programs mainly benefited those self-organized groups that were promoted by non-political interests and received strong support from international donors. The emergence of NGOs as a new institutional form of resource development influenced the creation of community and popular organizations in connection with social programs. They promoted initiatives at the “bottom” of society, providing financial support, supervision, and training. With the appropriate advice in new autonomous projects, NGOs actively promoted new self-managed enterprises in the communities (Rincon 2000).

The term “civil society” has become widely used in Venezuela since the early 1990s, a time when the autonomy from state control was still stressed. To counter the dehumanizing effect of an impersonal and bureaucratic world, small groups of citizens built circles of intimacy, where meaningful relations could be maintained based on equality and the guarantee of rights. The neighborhood movement, in all of its manifestations, began as uncoordinated efforts of middle-class citizens to resist unplanned urban growth and to defend their neighborhoods. According to Penford (1997), democratic procedures were virtually reduced to the mere election of those in power. Within a top-down system, policies from the central government were not associated with the real needs and demands of the communities at the local level. Political parties tended to be explicitly excluded, doubtless in reaction to the past domination by them of any organized expression of social interests while the irresponsibility of the elected representatives, and their lack of interaction with the

population, had generated concern about the role of citizens in the design and execution of measures to overcome the crisis (Crisp 1998).

As a consequence, after the elections of 1993, the dominating two-party system represented by Christian Democrats (*Copei*) and Social Democrats (*Acción Democrática*) collapsed, but representatives of the political parties dominated a large part of the neighborhood associations. By controlling these associations, the political parties occupied a key position in the barrios. In this sense, while having access to the authority, the associations started showing resistance against clientelistic practices. In addition, the committees of many politically independent associations were confronted with a major problem: if they did not want to have credibility and be reelected, they had to approach the political party in power in order to get the scarce resources that they needed for the improvement of their barrios. However, the majority of the population that did not participate in neighborhood associations felt strong opposition to political parties' practices (Rincon 2000).

With the arrival of President Hugo Chavez to power in 1999, with a strong support from the majority of the population, the expectations for deep social change were evident. Since the beginning of his administration, changes were immediate, the most visible and controversial being the endorsement of a new constitution. The 1999 Constitution, approved by a national referendum, has mandated the use of participation and the obligation of the State to facilitate favorable conditions for its practice. There are no less than 111 articles spelling out civic rights that address topics such as culture, education, indigenous rights, adequate housing and land distribution, worker safety, protection of family and children, and priority of the environment. From that list, Article 132 states, "everyone has the duty to fulfill his or her social responsibilities through participation in the political, civic, and community life of the country with the goal of

promoting and protecting human rights as the foundation of democratic coexistence and social peace”. Article 135 says, “the State’s obligation to the general welfare of society does not preclude the obligation of private individuals to participate according to their abilities”. These duties describe participation beyond the electoral process. They compel the public to see themselves as not so much the governed masses, but as active builders of their own society (Gable 2004).

The Constitution also addresses another aspect, which links to the importance of citizen education. Educating a citizen is a process of developing human beings that are fully conscious of their duties and rights, active participants in a democratic society, identified with national values, and conscious about commitments to the processes of social transformation. In this regard, the 1999 Venezuelan Constitution points out that “The State, with the participation of the families and society, will promote the process of civic education in accordance with the principles contained in this Constitution and in the laws” (Art. 102).

With this legal framework as a tool, President Chavez has demanded more public participation and has opened a window for the poor to communicate and express their desires and expectations. New actors, new ideas, and new paradigms were considered as he proposed the expansion of participation in the communities as a strategy to overcome poverty. According to him, participation would generate identity and a sense of belonging in the group, which would facilitate decision-making and action.

Despite not having clear social and economic policies while perpetuating the same paternalistic and clientele strategies of previous governments, Chavez’s first National Plan (1999) pointed out principles of the social policy: the universal guarantee to all citizens the fulfillment of their rights and duties; equal opportunities according to people’s needs and capabilities; and participation by empowering citizens to plan,

execute, and evaluate the public performance. In 2002, the government presented additional principles in the Strategic Social Plan (PES) “to guide public policies to respond to social needs, quality of life, and health: the intervention of the social causes of problems, empowerment; the creation of social quality of life networks; and building up new public institutions”. Participation became a means to transform the living conditions and it became a value that people recognized as a social good and asset (CESAP 2003). Nevertheless, the level of organization of the Venezuelan society remained defensive against formal institutions and, despite the existence of a network of organizations, it was still weak and centered on local issues (Rincon 2000).

Some events have proven how President Chavez has attempted to manipulate the participation of citizens, utilizing them to achieve support for his remaining in power. One of the most notable cases was observed in the organization of the Bolivarian Circles (*Circulos Bolivarianos or CBs*), nowadays extinct. The CBs were organized groups promoted and supported by the government and controlled directly from the Presidential palace, where they had to register. They began as community groups studying the Constitution and Venezuelan history and went on to work on local community improvement projects. Later, neighboring groups began addressing larger issues such as health and education. Eventually these groups expressed their desire to participate directly in the decision-making that affected their communities. Realizing this desire, Chavez called for the creation of the CBs as a mechanism for this participation and many of the aforementioned community groups became CBs. He considered himself their leader. According to the statutes, the CBs consisted of a variable number of members, not less than seven nor over eleven persons, which must gather to discuss the problems of their community—health, security, education, transportation, maintenance of the streets, urban neatness, childhood abandoned, environment, or justice—and to channel them

through the corresponding government agency to seek solutions. In addition, and according to their objectives, through the CBs, the community would be able to promote, encourage and raise cultural, scientific and sportive activities as well as other activities on behalf of its development.

President Chavez has assumed a sometimes aggressive, sometimes passive role intended to centralize power and disarticulate civil society. The media and the political opposition have shown how some of the Bolivarian Circles are linked to street violence and propaganda in support of Hugo Chavez and his followers and against the actions of the organized political opposition and civil society. The incidents witnessed by the media and disclosed during the events of April 11th, 2002 did not link the Bolivarian Circles with activities on behalf of the communities, but in creating an unstable environment that promoted violence to “defend the revolution” when the president called. These circumstances demonstrated the lack of seriousness and social responsibility of Chavez when he utilized mechanisms of citizen participation. Besides, the positive impacts of these groups in the communities in which they were constituted have been hard to show. The national government, with its renewed paternalistic attitude, reaches the communities with a large list of promises that, most of the time, are not covered. The intended positive effects of the Bolivarian Circles in the communities were not visible.

On April 11th and 12th, 2002, an organized opposition massively protested to ask for the resignation of Chavez but was repelled with violence. Subsequently, the repression forced the action of the military and civil groups to install a new president (Pedro Carmona) and a provisional assembly. This government held power for only 24 hours, after which Chavez was reinstalled as democratic president. In December of that same year, a large group of citizens, the industrial sector, and the national oil company embarked on a general strike to pursue Chavez’s resignation. After two months, the

country faced a profound economic crisis, a reduction of revenues from imports, and the control of foreign currency exchange, all these came with unexpected consequences on the population, affirmatively negative. After the strike, the effects of the crisis worsened.

The political scene was rocky in subsequent months, culminating in the recall referendum in August 2004, when 59% of the population voted against recalling President Hugo Chavez. With municipal elections also wrapped up in October of that same year, people expected the political scene to stabilize, following government victories in both polls. Although the economy was far from stable in 2005 and 2006, the short-term outlook was healthier than it was a few months before. Oil prices, which have remained higher than initially expected due to pressures on both the supply and the demand, have not only boosted real GDP growth and trade figures but have increased the flow of funds into the public purse.

By October 2003, President Chavez announced seven different “Bolivarian Missions” to fight poverty. These Missions are a series of social justice, social welfare, anti-poverty, educational, electoral and military recruiting programs that draw their name from Simón Bolívar. Among them, the first was Mission Robinson (launched July 2003), supposed to address illiteracy via a cooperation agreement with Cuba. Its second phase, Mission Robinson II, went beyond literacy and aimed to teach participants everything they needed to reach 6th grade. The government created Mission Ribas (launched November 2003), for individuals who dropped out of high school to complete their high school education. The same year, Mission Sucre (launched in late 2003), was essentially created as a scholarship program for university education.

In order to address the severe health problems in the “Barrios”, the Chavez government launched a community health program called “*Misión Barrio Adentro*” (“Mission Inside the Neighborhood”). The program, with the help of Cuban doctors, have

placed small community health clinics in the Barrios, areas that previously never had doctors. Also Mission Mercal was created as a network for distributing food throughout the country at slightly below market rates at government supported supermarkets. As a result, the Chavez government decided to establish a state sponsored food distribution network. However, just as with the Barrio Adentro program, markets of the Mission Mercal are supposed to serve areas that are currently underserved by the private sector.

Missions Habitat and Villanueva were launched in 2005 to impact the housing deficit, highly criticized by different sectors of society. The mission has had as its goal the construction of new housing units for the poor. The programs also seeks to develop agreeable and integrated housing zones that make available a full range of social services, from education to healthcare, which likens its vision to that of new urbanism. Critics have denounced its slow rate of construction.

Despite these efforts, society is likely to remain polarized, with anti-Chavez sentiment still simmering under the surface. The national government does not seem to be willing to address problems such as bureaucracy, extensive corruption, and an increasing demand for participation. Yet, the new processes are still linked to new forms of dependency. National research centers show an increase in poverty since Chavez came to power. On the other hand, some indicators suggest that poverty has become less severe in the past five years. After years, poverty in Venezuela has decreased even though the opposition argues that official data is manipulated to hide the low impact of the populist policies against macroeconomic indicators; a number only surpassed during the Lusinchi term.

The poor still expect the government to provide solutions to their problems and needs. State paternalism is as yet present and increasing. Despite the success of gross economic indicators, the reality is that the economic situation of the country indicates that

unemployment and inflation rates are rising, that the levels of poverty and extreme poverty have reached their maximum, and the expectations for the near future are doubtful. The government has made clear that all social programs and services are different from those of past administrations but, as CESAP (2003) has stated, there are no clear mechanisms to guide social action.

President Chavez was re-elected for a second six-year term in December 2006. He failed to gain support to redraft the Constitution. In a referendum at the beginning of December 2007, the electorate voted narrowly against the proposed reforms to the current Constitutional text. Therefore, proposals to make Venezuela a socialist state and to change the division of power and responsibility throughout the country were not incorporated into the Constitution. Despite the possible consequences, the government will continue to speak about empowering the people and pushing power down to a local level through ideas such as community councils (local decision-making bodies with budgetary powers).

Table 2: Households in poverty according to unsatisfied basic needs.

	1998	2000	2002	2004	2005	2006
Total number of households	4.870.228	4.996.523	5.758.490	6.004.141	6.135.569	6.319.445
Poor households	1.403.824	1.498.050	1.777.629	1.777.126	1.638.442	1.477.060
<i>Poor households (%)</i>	28,9	30,1	31,2	29,6	26,7	23,4
Non-extreme Poor	879.679	976.299	1.035.697	1.048.305	1.020.737	905.351
<i>Non-extreme poor (%)</i>	18,1	19,6	18,2	17,5	16,6	14,3
Extreme Poor	524.145	521.751	741.932	728.821	617.705	571.709
<i>Extreme Poor (%)</i>	10,8	10,5	13,0	12,2	10,1	9,0

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas

http://www.gerenciasocial.org.ve/bases_datos/gerenciasocial/Index.htm#

THE ROLE OF THE VENEZUELAN MUNICIPALITY

Since the scope of this research is to look at individuals and their communities and their interaction with the local government in one Latin American city, it is relevant to take a look at the municipal scale of decision-making. In this sense, the literature has suggested that most urban Latin American municipalities are now ten years into the effort to leave behind the age-old image of municipal government as incapable, inefficient, and corrupt and to become more accountable for their constituencies. Two factors have influenced this transformation. First, pushed by international donors, resource-strapped central governments, and new social actors, municipal governments are struggling to decentralize, modernize, democratize, and improve public administration. Second, whether cities grow slowly or rapidly, urban development is not possible without the existence of a government capable of supplying services and goods efficiently, and of providing certain direction to changes in the economy, the physical environment, and in the life conditions of inhabitants (González 1993). Clearly, good governance requires both political stability and real democratic participation (Cubitt 1995). In this sense, new actors and leaders with accountability to the community itself are emerging in the new institutional realm. New types of association are emerging between the public and private sector and, most importantly, the community is experiencing new ways of participating in government administration. Raising the issue of participatory democracy has helped prompt local officials to define their own objectives and levels of activities in the main areas of delivery of services. Local governments have found themselves increasingly pressured to demonstrate their abilities to step in and deal with key municipal issues and to obtain and maintain the participation and cooperation of the communities. Likewise, the mechanisms of control over their tasks have been enhanced. Communities have increased their pressure on issues and have learned to express their points of view by

means such as the election of local government authorities, community councils, and other forms of participation in an attempt to make them keep the promises and strategies for which they were elected (Licha 2002).

Citizen participation is regarded as the primary element of innovation in local governance. Efforts have been undertaken to make the municipality the foundation of the new State, by which the *municipalization* becomes the cornerstone of decentralization. Henceforth, the municipality will be seen as the institution most closely connected to citizens and as the fundamental structure for organizing government services. In Venezuela, the municipality represents the political-administrative unit associated to this strategy. It represents the structure for decision-making with regard to the collective life within a small territory, although subordinated to the sovereignty of the Nation (Kelly 1993). Veltmeyer (2001) adds that the municipality, in the context of the decentralization process, is generally seen as a privileged space for democratic politics and participatory development. Quintero (2001) points out this opportunity when he affirms how mayors and members of city councils appear as central political actors directly linked to the experience of citizen participation.

Citizen's participation may be achieved in terms of democratic representation, (including the election of mayors and municipal councils, and referendums), and administrative representation (municipal codes and laws). In addition, communities and local governments can use mechanisms of interaction between the people and their leaders, such as popular assemblies, town meetings and local councils. The primary aim is to strengthen democratic culture by institutionalizing these processes of participation at the various levels of government.

The role of the Venezuelan municipality in urban development has increased and strengthened indeed. Already in 1978, the law that ruled the Venezuelan municipal

government (*Ley Orgánica de Régimen Municipal* or LORM) set up these opportunities, as shown in its article 3, “the Municipality constitutes the primary, political and autonomous unit within the national organization.” By the end of the 1980s, the municipal government was in rapid transformation at the same time the neighborhood movement was generating pressures for change. The Presidential Commission for the Reform of the State (COPRE) considered the need to transform the structure of local government in order to transfer the responsibility and the credibility, which was required, to the local instances of power.

In 1987, the Senate passed a new *Ley Orgánica de Régimen Municipal (LORM)* (Municipal Government Law). The LORM represented a first intention to evolve the scheme of representative democracy into participatory democracy. The law established mechanisms of institutional participation such as the referendum, and required municipalities to provide and share information about their activities and records. Likewise, the Law of Decentralization and Transferring of Competences of the State strengthened the transformation, which had the objective of decentralizing some functions traditionally in the hands of the central government. The growth of cities and the pressures of a larger urban population fed the process. Changes were well received because they tended to generate pressure for the improvement of local management (Kelly 1993).

The LORM was modified in 1989 to create the figure of the “city mayor”. This new representative would have executive functions and would exercise the municipal government jointly with the municipal council. A new Political-Territorial Division Law (1990) later specified that the states would remain constituted by municipalities (*Municipios*), and these in parishes (known locally as *parroquias*). The managerial task was not limited to the city mayor. He or she would require an efficient managerial team

and depend likewise on the collaboration of all the citizens who had to learn how to contribute or collaborate.

The first direct election of city councils and mayors¹⁹ was achieved in December of 1992, which still represents the best way to select local rulers today. This Municipality still has a democratic character and pursues the efficiency of the government and the administration towards the fulfillment of people's interests (Alcaldía de Maracaibo 2000). More recently, a new constitution, approved in an open referendum in 1999, mandates that the mayor must be elected by popular vote for a period of four years and that he or she can be reelected for a following period. However, the constitution also states that, subject to consultation of the electorate, the mayor's mandate can be revoked.

Fiszbein and Lowden (1999) explain why the presence of these new participants—the elected mayors—is important. First, more opportunities for public local elections exist at the local level and greater potential benefits are available from the participation of the community; and second, financial, institutional and human resources are more limited for municipalities than national governments, which creates a real need to share the responsibility for, and management of, local issues with the community more efficiently.

The intervention of the municipality in urban development is expressed in three basic activities: planning, implementation, and control. Planning indicates what kind of city we want while the other two refer to the tangible process of building the city. With regard to urban planning, it is the responsibility of the municipality to design the local urban development plan, which must take into consideration all social sectors and the distinct communities. But in reality, as González (1993) recognizes, if we take into

¹⁹ Other Latin American countries went through the same legal adjustment process. Argentina reinstated sub national elections in 1983. In Colombia, the first elections of mayor and governors were held in 1988 and 1992 respectively. In Bolivia direct local elections were introduced in 1985 and legally confirmed by a Law in 1994 (Fiszbein and Lowden, 1999).

account the financial and organizational capabilities of the Venezuelan municipalities, only a minority counts on the necessary resources for the preparation of plans, whether through municipal planning agencies or consulting teams appointed by the mayor.

In the 1990s the execution or implementation of services such as the construction and maintenance of public works was still a highly centralized activity. The central government was in charge of the execution of more than 50% of the total budget approved for this task. Reduced participation was not a phenomenon limited to the medium and small municipalities. It was also observed in larger municipalities²⁰. In the specific case of poor settlements, the patterns of space occupation, as well as the plans to regularize and legalize settlements have not had effective consequences. Furthermore, they have affected the implementation of solutions. The reasons are obvious. There is the difficulty and cost of providing services when the space and location have not been reserved and the infrastructure networks not planned. Moreover, when the municipality offers land for the location of new residents, it is usually suitable to environmental risks, which affects people's own security and social stability.

Municipalities face greater obstacles to exercise control over urban functions, such as the absence or ineffectiveness of legal instruments to provide the regulatory framework to the local government (zoning ordinances or building codes) and the shortage of human resources to develop projects and carry out the supervision of works. Besides, the lack of financial resources adds to the lack of skilled human resources for the administration of our cities and towns and makes the management of urban growth more difficult. This shortage of resources is associated with two problematic conditions: the high expectation of citizens with regard to what the municipality should provide for them and the relative small disposition of the communities to assume the responsibility for

²⁰ Gonzalez (1993), in his study, compares the Caracas' metropolitan area and its municipalities.

local action as their own. Even though a context with conditions like these may exist, which may indicate the existence of a long social-political process, municipalities try to function as effective intermediaries in order to adapt development policies to the local conditions. It is mandatory to keep citizens informed, as well as to promote their participation in municipal management.

At the community level, neighborhood meetings have been the natural and most utilized structure of representation. From their relatively spontaneous creation after 1958, community organizations evolved, taking two forms in the 1970s: the legally recognized community councils and the neighbors associations²¹. The establishment and subsequent development of the neighborhood movements in the country has responded to two facts: the boost of urban problems as a result of urbanization, and the unclear relationship between government participatory policies and the expansion of political parties and neighbors associations²².

From its development, the community council (*junta comunal* or *junta de barrio*) did not achieve greater legitimacy due to its low level of accountability and because its members were selected by the municipal council according to the balance of political power within the council and not within the community. Kelly (1993) affirms that the neighbor associations suffer from the same weakness of the community council. Although they tend to be established in moments of alliance against a specific threat, they also tend to fade away when the threat disappears or when the neighbors are tired of struggling. Individuals or groups with more power have greater access to decision-makers. However, we must be aware that some decision-makers will think first in

²¹ Neighbors associations reached greater importance with the 1978 Venezuelan Municipal Law (LORM), which recognized and gave them legal status. These groups participated in the preparation of the new version of the law, approved in 1989 (Grohmann 1996).

²² A census of community groups carried out by the Ministry of Family (or *Ministerio de la Familia*) in 1989 revealed that there were 5036 of these groups in the country. Of these groups, 9.7% (490 associations) accounted were in the state of Zulia. The number is significant enough if we consider that there were only 25 registered neighborhood associations in 1971 (Hanes 1994).

rewarding a political party, family members, friends or business partners, or themselves, rather than the citizens.

Traditionally, citizens have communicated their aspirations and priorities to the municipal authorities through their neighbor associations, which subsequently should direct them to the Local Planning Councils (*Consejos Locales de Planificación*), the representative bodies in their parish. It falls on these councils to establish the means of consultation and communication with the community and its social organizations.

More recently, on March 2006, the Communal Council Law (*Ley de los Consejos Comunales*) was passed, whereby communities that decide to organize themselves into a council can be given official state recognition and access to federal funds and loans for public projects toward the solution to the needs and aspirations of the communities. The Law acknowledges the significance of community and defines it as:

The social agglomeration of families and citizens that inhabit a specific geographical area, that share a history and common interests, that know and relate to each other, that make use of the same public services and share similar needs and potentialities: economic, social, urban and other types (Art. 4).

The Law contributes a definition of community organization aimed to guide citizens and/or an assembly of citizens in creating possible associative forms that can then be endorsed by this regulation. All or part of the proposed groups or other new forms can be components of the organizational structure of the Communal Council, if the assembly considers their creation to address targeted issues according to assessments of local needs. The definition of community organization, stated by the Law, states that these are:

Organizations that exist or can exist in the communities and that group an assembly of citizens according to common objectives and interests... such as: lands committees, health committees, technical water tables, cultural groups, sports clubs, points of encounter and women organizations, unions and workers

organizations, juvenile or student organizations, cooperatives, civil associations, among others (Art. 4).

The Law also considers, in Art. 5, that the organization, operation, and action of the Communal Councils are led by the principles of cooperation, solidarity, transparency, honesty, efficiency, social responsibility, social control, equity, justice, and social gender equality.

The procedure used to put the Law into practice has been criticized because it skips local and national urban planning procedures and does not correspond with current urban plans and assessment of needs. At the same time, the types of projects that are promoted and lobbied from the base become a recurring request. As a consequence, communities that share geographical boundaries and identities do not seem to combine efforts. They therefore duplicate the demand for services—education, health, security—in a certain urban location. It may not be the case when addressing housing or local infrastructure needs, which directly affect members. Nevertheless, those who support the Communal Council affirm that it can provide a direct communication channel between the national government and the organized communities for the allocation of resources. Nevertheless, projects promoted by these groups are not necessarily supported locally. In other cases, groups with a distinct origin from the Communal Council, and with a longer history, do not reach their goals and see how these groups acquire funding to implement their projects. In any case, this is a recent topic for discussion currently being assessed.

CONCLUSIONS

The urbanization process by itself is not enough to explain the emergence of the neighbor associations. One must add the manifested incapacity of national and municipal governments to formulate and apply coherent and effectively coordinated urban growth

policies and the progressive isolation of citizens from the decisions making processes that results. These factors reveal the need for more participation and effective organization of the communities to assume or audit government functions and to defend the interests of the collective.

Sustained participation in development has demanded transformations in three domains: methods and procedures, institutional cultures, and personal behavior and attitudes. As Blackburn and Chambers (1998) have pointed out, the processes of organizational learning and organizational change are likely to require profound changes in an institution's prevailing attitudes, behaviors, norms, skills, and procedures.

As a design for organizational development, the term "organizational learning community" is used to describe a learning event (Pedler 1981) that involves bringing together a group of people as peers to meet personal learning needs primarily through a sharing of resources and skills. Each individual takes responsibility for identifying and meeting his or her own learning needs as well as responsibility for helping others identify and meet their needs, offering themselves as a flexible resource for the community. We have seen how participatory methods and techniques contribute to this inquiry and transformation. If individual transformation is essential, it is important to determine when the qualitative and quantitative changes in individuals add up to the group's capacity for development.

Regarding people's involvement in public life, citizens can get their voices heard in multiple ways, from the most simple and direct (i.e. solicit audience with a public agent) to the most complex and coordinated—forming neighbor associations or protesting publicly. However, the real effect in a community is realized when its members recognize each other and interact directly even though these conditions are difficult to maintain due to diversity, individualism, paternalism and even political confrontation. If citizens are to

become genuinely involved in public life and affairs a more explicit approach to citizenship education is required. It is about enabling citizens to make their own decisions and to take responsibility for their own lives and communities.

The Venezuelan experience, present since the process of urbanization took place, does not apparently fit into the equivalent social movement scheme of the social actor as generator of change. Instead, the experience identifies with interest groups. Even though paternalism is still present in all stages of government, municipalities try to function as intermediaries in order to adapt national development policies to the local conditions, to keep citizens informed as well as to promote their participation in municipal management. Current regulations provide communities the opportunity to coordinate actions and access to federal funds to implement changes locally. Within the legal and institutional framework, the progressive development of low-income neighborhoods and dwellings should be conceptually, technically and periodically reassessed, and place a great value on the sharing of knowledge and on cooperation between federal agencies, states, cities and communities.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods

The chapter makes a brief reference to the principles of Participatory Action Research and Participant Observation to explain the progress of the methodological assumptions and the implications of the fieldwork in the selection and application of the approach and organization of this research. The objective of the research has consisted on the evaluation and continuous monitoring of the program “Promotion of Full Citizenship” with the application of methods that seek knowledge by means of objectivity. The research includes a preliminary bibliographical review of the theoretical framework to understand the meaning of participation at the community level and the implications of organizational development and self-improvement in development, the review of the principles of the local program and the social-economic data of the communities chosen as case studies. A survey of the initial group of beneficiaries and the observation of meetings of the management group and the communities contribute to the analysis. A final series of interviews with both facilitators and a sample group of beneficiaries provides the input to assess the impact of the program in the motivation of people to participate in their communities. In these events, information is extracted, which permits the evaluation of their new expectations and attitudes, as they differ or not from the initial condition.

FROM PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH (PAR) TO PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION (PA).

Participation goes beyond informing the community about development projects, or only considering their knowledge about issues affecting them and their priorities. If this assumption is valid and somehow advocated by the researcher, true participation in

which a dialogue approach is included, becomes the process where the priorities and ideas are reflected in any given proposed projects. Dialogue thus becomes important to such learning. Residents get involved, become recognized by others, and recognize too that they themselves can act in ways they had not before (Forester 1999). The research was initially conceived as an opportunity to put into practice a Participatory Action Research approach (PAR), a methodology that provides the theoretical and practical framework to conduct this kind of study since it represents an educational process for the participants in the research program as well as for the researcher. PAR, as collaborative problem solving of community-defined problems, respects and works with people's own capabilities to produce knowledge and sees participation as the involvement of all actors in the research phases. Thus, it becomes an educational process of community mobilization for development through dialogue and reflection on action.

In my practice in the field, the expectations and motivation to implement a PAR approach to define and investigate issues and problems with a group of people, as an attempt to contribute to their solution, moved toward a less active role. This direction came after reflection about my place and role in the group. PAR, defined as an action process in which both facilitators and collaborators learn about and work toward improving social conditions, seemed adequate as a methodological approach and as an opportunity for the researcher to build leadership. Given a continuous cycle of study-reflection-action, the research inherently involves formative evaluation through dialogue and reflection, respecting and working with people's own capability. The learning process may be facilitated by an outside professional, but with control in the hands of the community (Wilson 1997).

Even though the facilitators appointed by Ciudadanía Plena did not have any research interest as part of their responsibilities, they intentionally focused on the

motivation of the group of beneficiaries, conducting a collective analysis of the underlying causes of their problems, and to act as a group to attempt to solve them, all of which are PAR statements. The use of Participant Observation (PO) validated new methodological assumptions and progressively helped the organization of the research around the participatory process in the barrios. Afterward, my task, as participant observant was more adequate since I did not want to disrupt or overlap the work of others in the group.

The definition of participant-observer is a person who is skilled enough to participate in group work and observe group processes at the same time. Participant observation is a straightforward qualitative technique with roots in traditional ethnographic research (Mack et al 2005). The objective of PO is to help the researcher learn the perspectives held by study populations. The researcher presumes that there will be diverse perspectives within any given community. By immersing him or herself in the subject being studied, usually over an extended period, the researcher is presumed to gain understanding, perhaps more deeply than could be obtained, for example, by questionnaire items²³. It can be justified particularly where individual researchers already have prior exposure in the community and have gained people's confidence.

Observing is aimed at describing and recording behavior as it occurs. From the behavior of group members, an observer can make inferences about the group process or the way in which the group is functioning. The research in general involved a range of methods such as informal interviews, direct observation, participation in the life of the group, collective discussions, and analyses of responses produced within the group.

²³ What is a Participant-Observer? In <http://www2.tech.purdue.edu/Ols/courses/ols388/hill/participantobserver.doc>

Although PO is generally characterized as qualitative research, it can (and often does) include quantitative dimensions.

The first step is to decide which members' behaviors, actions and skills are to be observed, select the observer and persons to be observed, then develop a checklist. Second the researcher observes and records how often each member performs the specified behaviors. The observer also looks at the frequency with which group members are engaged in the specified behaviors and then infer how the group is functioning in that aspect of the process under observation. The final step is to summarize the observations in a clear and useful manner and then present the summary to the group as feedback when needed. Periodically, the group should stop its task work and discuss the process being used. The entire process is based on the assumption that the way people see their lives and formulate their own interests is of central importance to inquiry and action and that collective inquiry produces new knowledge for participants (Friesen 1999).

Personal skills and attributes

Knowledge by itself cannot transform reality, and action without study and reflection can lead only to blind or futile spontaneity. The desired objectives cannot be fully achieved without an ideological alliance of mutual commitment between the local inhabitants and the intellectuals to reach group goals. The local-external exchange would achieve two important objectives: first, a critical and reflective attitude on part of the local people; and second, a common pattern of thought shared by the base groups and the professionals (Fals-Borda 1988).

In terms of personal skills and attributes, the steps in developing competence in being a participant observer include: observing; giving and receiving feedback; reflecting and setting goals for improvement; modifying behavior in the next group meeting; and

repeating the cycle over and over again automatically in every group of which you are a member.

Practitioners who begin to use participatory processes believe that at the core of what good participation has become is self-critical awareness, Freires' critical self-reflection (Gajardo 1985), personal behavior and attitudes, and engagement with action—finding what works and then asking why (Chambers 1997). Forester (1999) proposes

“...a transformative theory of social learning that explores not only how arguments change in dialogues and negotiations but how we change as well. Here citizens not only pursue interests strategically and display themselves expressively, but reproduce and reconstitute their social and political relationships with one another too.”

This transformative and learning process should be supported by the following assumptions:

- The recognition and celebration of diversity. If they are able to address their differences, they must be able to listen to one another and to speak responsively as well (Forester 1999).
- Changing behavior and attitudes.—from dominating to facilitating, respecting local people and having confidence in them, and the willingness to be evaluated by different stakeholders.
- The development of a culture of sharing of information, of methods, of field experiences between Government, NGOs, or local people.
- Learning to interact and organize through dialogue and experience (Fals-Borda 1988), not lecturing but facilitating, the ability to listen and engage in dialogue and mutual learning, the ability to be reflexive, and a capacity for a vision (Blackburn and Chambers 1998).

- Listening together as we recognize as important not only words but also issues, details, relationships, and even people we may have ignored or not appreciated in the past (Forester 1999).
- Commitment to equity and empowerment of those who are excluded. While facilitating the process, the combination of experience and commitment allows the practitioner to see for whom such knowledge is intended: the base groups themselves (Fals-Borda 1988).
- Individual responsibility and judgment, with critical self-awareness, embracing and learning from error, continuously trying to do better, building learning and improvement into everyday experience.

Participatory approaches, methods, and behaviors enable poor people to express themselves, analyze their realities, and plan, monitor and evaluate their actions; as they also contribute the practitioner to learn, to be more self-reflective, and to recognize that if they do not begin with themselves, they are unlikely to make a real difference to the more abstract economic or social dimensions of development (Blackburn and Chambers 1998).

METHODS

Participatory research is used to encompass approaches and methods in which professionals act and reflect on what they do and how they learn approaches which use dialogue and participatory research to enhance local people's awareness and confidence, and then to empower these actions (Chambers 1997). This position has been accompanied by a shift in impact, from methods to professional change, from behavior and attitudes to personal change, and from field applications to changes in organizational procedures and cultures.

Whereas quantitatively oriented methods seek insight through objectivity, more qualitative approaches pursue involvement. This immersion in as natural a setting as

possible allows an inside view of the social context and the processes that occur. To increase the understanding of people's needs and to study the interaction of stakeholders and the impact of these processes, it is therefore necessary to know about the physical and social characteristics, the perception of past and present government interventions, the appropriateness of management tools, and the mechanisms of participation that are used in the community development process.

The goal consisted of the continuous evaluation of the plan in the settings in which it took place, a group of poor communities; and at the same time, the evaluation of the level of identification and integration of the partner institutions. My aim was for subjective understanding by means of direct observation, dialogue and interpretation of people's opinions, rather than a manipulative quest for prediction and control of their participation in the plan. I looked at how participation in the Promotion of Citizenship Plan in Maracaibo was perceived by a selected group of community members who benefited from the program, community leaders, staff team and facilitators, and described the outcomes of their almost daily interaction during a certain period of time. I considered the utilization of the initial group of beneficiaries surveyed in 2002, of which many have renounced or have not been able to continue in the program. The subsequent evaluation of the group of persons that have covered the requirements to obtain the credits provided the base for comparison and conceptualization.

The plan, as stakeholders had proposed, attempted to provide a framework to promote values, rights and duties in low-income citizens using small credits as a means to strengthen local micro-enterprises or improve the quality of housing units. The observation and registration of the process included identifiable changes in people's attitudes, behaviors, and opinions that residents and technicians could identify.

In addition to the results that could be obtained by analyzing the amount of financial resources allocated to a number of families and the rate of return to satisfy the expectations of politicians, the case study provided an opportunity for local agents to reflect on the design and implementation of a framework for development in which the communities, minimally considered in past administrations, and local government agencies could work, dialogue and learn cooperatively. While conducting the field research in the communities, the use of narratives—notes from interviews, meetings, and informal conversations, narrative citations or description of particular events—were the basis for data collection. I interpreted data by giving them meaning and concept in the form of themes, motifs and generalizations. The work suggested the decisions about the applicant's requirements, the training workshops, the follow-up strategy, and the participatory evaluation of the plan. Results became important when compared to the plan's objectives and the possible success concerning economic well-being and individual and group satisfaction.

Even if these were not the final questions that I was able to address, I stated the following hypotheses as a starting point to conduct the analysis:

Hypothesis 1. The principles of empowerment and collaboration promoted in the community by the local development program contribute to accomplish its objectives and to strengthen the citizenship values associated with it.

Hypothesis 2. The decision-making phase of the development plan and its successful implementation are strengthened when the development agent learns to perceive the reality, needs, and expectations of the beneficiaries.

Hypothesis 3. The effective use of citizenship education provides the beneficiaries with a more active role in decisions affecting their lives and suggests that the results of the development plan are accountable.

I coordinated the research in the following phases to evaluate these assumptions (refer to Figure 1 for a sequence of events).

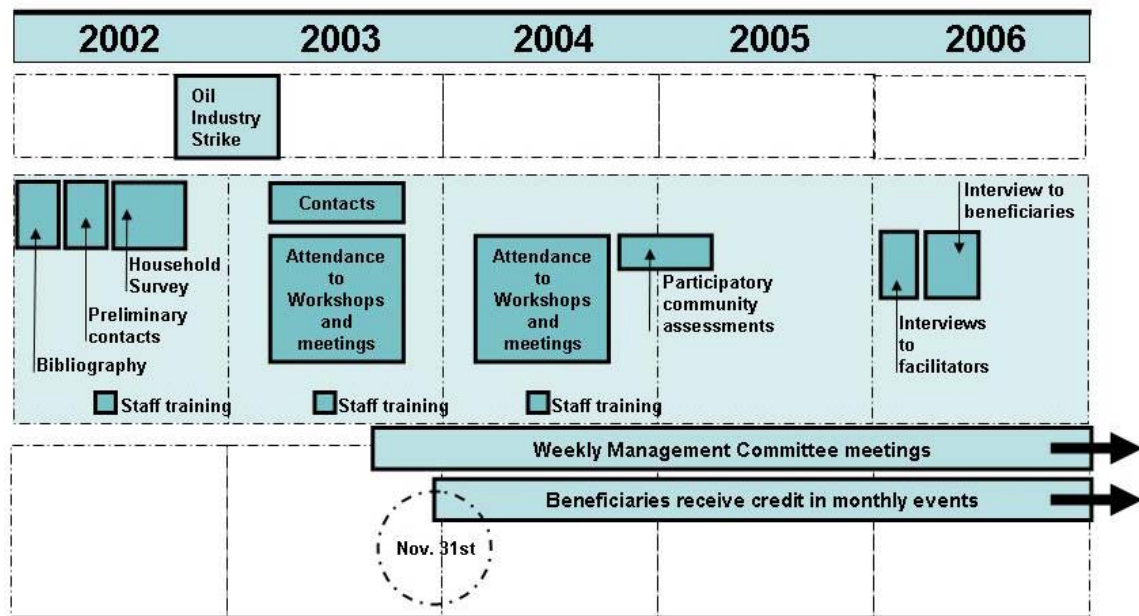


Figure 1: Research activities timeline.

Bibliographic documentation

Theoretical framework: concepts, and interpretation of the new development paradigm

Prior to the analysis of the results of the implementation of the “*Ciudadanía Plena*” program, it was important to review some theoretical concepts that have provided the basis for other local economic development projects and that were very similar to the case study in Maracaibo in terms of motivation and objectives. The theoretical review thus had covered issues tied to the interpretation of poverty and marginality, the building up of citizenship and the strengthening of values at the local level.

The literature review has also discussed the concepts of community, association and participation and their relation to the development framework with an emphasis on overcoming poverty through community learning. In addition, it highlighted the importance of the use of participatory and technical methods, the role of the municipality in regard to local community development, and the consideration of organizational development and organizational learning as the basis for individual and collective development.

Assessment of the “Promotion of Full Citizenship” Program

Functional structure and coordination of the program

I conducted a rapid assessment of the main objectives of the program and the structure of coordination, which included the governmental and non-governmental institutions that had committed to promote and carry out the program in the poor communities of the city. This evaluation was made possible by reviewing legal documents and written material that described the plan, its objectives and the attributions and responsibilities of each partner institution.

First phase of implementation: the pilot experience

The pilot experience, carried out in Barrio Angelica de Lusinchi in 1999, was well documented by local university researchers. The review of this material provided constructive information, which was useful to assess the way participation was used as a vehicle of interaction between the program coordinators and the members of this community. The task required the review of final reports and the use of the information provided by some of the beneficiaries during community meetings and workshops during the development of this research.

Second phase of implementation. Selection of the case studies.

The Municipality established the preliminary selection criteria, which included the precariousness of the living conditions in the barrio and high poverty levels, the existence of infrastructure works previously done by the municipal government, an acceptable level of social integration of the community which would facilitate implementation, and its location in the periphery of the city. In this sense, most of the 288 barrios in the Municipality of Maracaibo²⁴ displayed these characteristics and others, such as low integration of social structure and low access to formal housing markets.

The municipality made the decision to initiate the implementation in a group of twelve barrios unilaterally. The selection followed a basic assumption: the barrios should be located in four different parishes and be distant enough from each other to exhibit a geographically equitable distribution of resources. Despite the resolution, the partner institutions agreed because they considered first that these twelve communities, as many others were left out in the initial stage of the program, were in need of immediate assistance, and second that their geographic locations in the municipality was an acceptable indicator to fairly distribute the benefits provided by the State among Maracaibo's poor residents.

Using structured analysis of census data and poverty reports in addition to an inventory and general need assessment that would facilitate the selection criteria was difficult to accomplish due to the lack of updated and reliable information and the urgency to begin. Due to the complexity of studying the twelve communities associated with the program during the second phase of implementation, I proposed to work on four of them (it represents the 25% of the original selection). As a condition that guided this selection, each of the barrios chosen had to be located in distinct parishes, be located in

²⁴ Arquiluz - IFAD 2005.

the periphery of the city, and be representative of poor living conditions. As a result, I chose to follow up the participatory process of the group of beneficiaries in the barrios Angelica de Lusinchi, 23 de Marzo, Miraflores, and Rómulo Gallegos. Table 4 shows the preliminary group of communities and the number of respondents in 2002.

Table 3: Poverty indicators that guided the municipality in the selection of barrios.

INDICATOR	MEASUREMENT
Poverty level	High
Family income	200-300 US\$ (Low)
Social structure	Low integration
Community organization	Basic
Community management efforts	Desirable
Level of qualifications of population	Low
Urban equipment	Minimum
Access to formal housing markets	Low
Access to public services	Low
Land tenure	Mostly Irregular
Qualitative and quantitative housing deficit	High
Level of qualification of population	Low

Source: Alcaldía de Maracaibo 2000.

As a first attempt, I expected to evaluate households that benefited from both types of small credits—housing improvement and micro-enterprising—but I was only able to obtain full access to social-economic data associated with housing projects, which was offered by the HABITAT-LUZ foundation.

I continuously solicited the data on micro-enterprising but I never received a response from the other NGO in charge of processing this information and who was

responsible for preparing the assessment of economic activities identified in the barrios. I made the decision to move forward mainly due to initial time constraints. Nevertheless, since I volunteered at HABITAT-LUZ, I successfully followed up on the housing component of the program from 2003 to 2006, whose beneficiaries have been a valid representation of this social group.

I reviewed previously elaborated documents by the Research Institute of the School of Architecture at University of Zulia to expose the basic characteristics of three of the communities in the study. To assess the characteristics of Barrio Maria Angelica de Lusinchi I reviewed documents that described the pilot experience. To assess the characteristics of Barrios 23 de Marzo and Miraflores, I reviewed the document "Project UPF2" (IFAD 2002), which includes an updated inventory of poor communities in a large section of the city. In the case of barrio Rómulo Gallegos, with no existing documentation, I followed the analytical framework used in the Project UPF2 (IFAD 2002) to describe the community. In addition, the information collected with a survey conducted during the last quarter of 2002 (explained next) in the four barrios was used to develop a descriptive profile of the population of these four communities.

When working with these communities, the methodology for data collection included a preliminary survey conducted at the end of 2002, the preparation of location maps, attending working sessions at the management level and citizenship education workshops in the barrios, and interviewing participants after they completed their housing improvement projects. I collected the necessary data for the study at the same time that I became acquainted with the communities, their residents and their leaders. I expected to gain their confidence so that people could rely on me as a researcher with trustworthy intentions so they would be more open to sharing knowledge and personal experiences.

Preliminary household survey

The meaning of a social action or statement depends, in an important way, on the context in which it appears. In this sense, in order to describe in quantitative terms the social-economic conditions of the families at the time they received the microcredits and attended the citizenship education sessions, I evaluated people's opinion regarding their household income and savings, community participation, and physical living conditions by means of a household survey. The task consisted of evaluating data obtained in a survey coordinated by the Research Institute of the School of Architecture and Design at University of Zulia, the HABITAT-LUZ Foundation and SAMI, in which I was actively involved during the last quarter of 2002.

The sample population accounted for the total number of adult heads of household (represented by 296 individuals) from the four communities in the study who openly expressed their interest in participating and benefiting from the program (Tables 4 and 5). The entire population of the barrios was initially contacted, on a house-by-house basis, during visits to these areas with the cooperation of the local community leaders who promoted the activities among residents. At this time, people were invited to attend the various introductory meetings in these barrios. As result, the number of respondents to the survey represented those individuals who attended the meetings and were willing to respond to the questionnaire. Sex, ethnic background, and state of health did not color the selection. The main requirement, besides age (only adults were surveyed), was current residence in the community evaluated.

The survey was given orally in Spanish (native language of participants) in people's own houses and by appointment. At that moment, people were asked which sub-program they wanted to benefit from.

Table 4: Number of volunteer respondents, 2002 survey.

COMMUNITIES	Number of Respondents	% of total	Number of Families	Response rate
1. LUIS HURTADO HIGUERA PARISH				
BARRIO ANGELICA DE LUSINCHI *	45	9%	398	11.3%
Barrio El Gaitero	52	10%		
2. IDELFONSO VASQUEZ PARISH				
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO*	77	15%	528	14.6%
Barrio Mirtha Fonseca	8	2%		
Barrio Balmiro Leon	22	4%		
3. ANTONIO BORJAS ROMERO PARISH				
BARRIO MIRAFLORES *	174	35%	461	37.7%
Barrio Libertador	14	3%		
4. COQUIVACOA PARISH				
Barrio Teotiste de Gallegos	15	3%		
BARRIO RÓMULO GALLEGOS *	65	13%	396	16.4%
Barrio Santa Rosa de Agua	17	3%		
Barrio Puerto Caballo	10	2%		
	499	100%		

Source: SAMI, 2004. * case studies.

Program agents and community leaders invited the entire population in these barrios, on a house-by-house basis, to attend the introductory meetings in 2002. The number of respondents represented the individuals who were present at introductory meetings and voluntarily accepted to respond to the survey, which interviewers conducted in their own houses by appointment.

Table 5: Initial number of applications by type of credit.

Community	Housing improvement	Micro-enterprises	Total
Barrio Angélica de Lusinchi	35	10	45
Barrio 23 de Marzo	74	3	77
Barrio Miraflores	141	33	174
Barrio Rómulo Gallegos	46	19	65
Total	296	65	361

Source: SAMI Database

The survey contained useful information about the local population, which helped to characterize its social-economic reality in regards to living conditions, quality of housing, level of organization and interest in participation, among other issues. Consequently, this household income-expenditure and saving information had helped the local economic advisors to determine the financial opportunities and constraints in a household-by-household basis.

I participated in the design of the survey instrument, in the application of a pre-test in each community, the training of approximately thirty interviewers, the supervision of the fieldwork and in the data processing. Each item was discussed with a group of twenty residents to clarify both item purpose, content and word usage so that the survey could be understood by all barrio residents. Subjective interpretation of survey questions and answers was minimized by using the language and terminology most familiar to the study group. The resulting questionnaire included the following sections in the way they were organized in the survey.

Section 1. Information about the solicitant (head of household): nationality, place of origin, duration as resident in the community, marital status, current occupation, employment status, and income level.

Section 2. Similar to section 1, it collects information about the solicitant's partner (wife or husband): nationality, place of origin, duration as resident in the community, marital status, current occupation, employment status, and income level.

Section 3. Information about household's income and family composition, land tenure, house ownership, savings and credit history (questions in pages 280-281):

20. Current occupation.

21. Condition of occupation.

52. Household income, specified by member of household.

53. Consideration of income versus expenses.

57. Land tenure

58. Housing tenure

59. Do you have savings?

Section 4. Opinion about the community and her or his participation: issues affecting the community, community groups, level of participation and membership, leadership, and motivation and interest to participate in workshops (questions in page 282):

66. What are the five most important issues in your community?

67. Do you know any community organization in the barrio besides the neighbors association?

68. Which are its or their achievements?

69. Is it necessary to have other type of organizations in the barrio?

70. Have you or a member of your household been member of a neighbors group? Specify.

71. Is the group active?

72. If positive; How has your participation been?

73. If negative;, why? 73a. Are you willing to participate in a community group? What are your reasons?

74. Would you be interested in participating in and attending workshops to improve the organization, the participation and the relationships?

Section 5. Description of solicitant's housing unit and assessment of environmental threats:

80. Is your dwelling at risk of natural hazards? If affirmative, can you specify what kind?

81. Is your dwelling at risk by built elements? If affirmative, can you specify what kind?

I personally verified the data processing and corrected minor errors produced during the transferring of information from hard copies into the database. The subsequent statistical results were a useful tool for the staff team in the decision-making process of resources allocation, the technical and financial feasibility of projects, and the amount of credits to be granted. I did not participate in this process to avoid bias but confirmed the objectivity of the decisions.

Attendance of community meetings, citizen education workshops, and staff meetings

Between 2002 and 2004, I observed a series of working sessions and community meetings and joined the local groups in community workshops organized by the coordinators of the plan. In these meetings, participants were able to identify relevant issues, key concerns and the appropriate methods and tools for gathering, analyzing, and providing information for decision-makers. Community workshops highlighted people's concerns and disappointments with the plan and were an opportunity to explain the process and clarify doubts and misinterpretations. In addition, NGOs representatives, municipal government agents, and community leaders were invited to participate in workshops to strengthen the organization's capacity, their vision as a group and their mutual acceptance.

The community learning process (*proceso de capacitación*) was organized as a sequence of workshops. Beneficiaries were required to attend all the sessions as a requirement for credit. Workshops were open to all members of the community, even though only the immediate beneficiaries were the ones who attended the four sessions. A group of facilitators appointed by the partner institutions designed the theoretical structure and strategies for each workshop.

In each event, the program's facilitator introduced the researcher and the research objectives and procedure, and then asked the audience for permission to allow me to observe and take notes. At this point, the audience gave oral consent.

Field data provides detailed descriptions of the events from my immersion and trustworthy experience in the social interaction of the beneficiaries. In each of the events I attended, I recorded: date of event, location, number and type of participants, and topics and issues discussed, as concrete, complete and comprehensive as possible. I used my own words and opinions when necessary but, mostly, I recorded people's own words. I retyped the notes soon after I left the scene to keep systematic track of the experience. After seeing specific physical actions and hearing words, I used background cultural knowledge of the context and my own knowledge and familiarity with the issues affecting these communities to contribute to the interpretation. The utility of the information gathered in meetings and workshops is presented in a way that protects the identity and privacy of the persons who contributed their personal knowledge and experiences. Notes and quotes used in the description and analysis—presented in chapters 4 and 5—do not show the real name of the individuals who stated them. Instead, fictitious names are used when necessary.

Post-credit open-ended interviews to facilitators and beneficiaries

In order to understand the facilitator's identification with his or her task and the possible bond between the learning assumptions and their personal experiences while working in these low-income communities, I was able to interview three of the five professionals hired to facilitate the citizenship education workshop (two women and one man). These facilitators applied the methodology of Neuro-Linguistic Programming as an important tool in the preparation and implementation of the citizenship education workshops. Their theoretical approach was based on their prior knowledge of this methodology, previous training in the application of the methodology and practical implementation in distinct settings, mostly as attending employees of private and public sector institutions in processes of self-improvement.

Post-credit open-ended interviews with beneficiaries

Subsequently, I carried out a series of open-ended interviews to local beneficiaries of the program, following the assumption that participants know their situation better and have a perspective of their problems and needs that outsiders cannot fully share. The argument here is that the resident of the barrio is the expert and is interviewed as an individual with special and unique knowledge. This same person is valued as he or she directly experiences the reality we want to impact.

I conducted these series of interviews with a sample group of beneficiaries during two months in 2006. Ordinary people were interviewed because they were representative of the targeted group. They covered a sample of 14.5% of the initial group of beneficiaries and 29% of the group that successfully completed the citizenship and technical education and were able to materialize some kind of physical improvement in their dwellings. During this process, the program respected privacy at all times.

I structured my interview as a conversation but followed a series of easy questions. The interview was given orally in Spanish (native language of participants) and using an appropriate vocabulary to adapt to the educational level that characterizes the group. With this approach, I defined the overall scope of the interview (community development, not national politics), the interviewee, labeled as a conversational partner, provided the specific focus of the conversation. My job then was to listen carefully enough to hear what people had to say and to be able to follow up on the topics of importance in conversation. What I heard, learned, and reported was from the perspective of the conversational partners, not from some imposed model. In the informal interviews, I, as the interviewer, was likely to start with some ideas to stimulate the informant to talk. But beyond this introduction, I simply listened and recorded.

Group interviews and, when possible, casual or random encounters, were often powerful and efficient but difficult to code and statistically assess, perhaps due to the continuing focus on counting through individual questionnaire-based interviews.

Analysis and interpretation

Following an interpretive and constructivist approach, evidence was inferred from the logic of the stories, events, and narratives gathered in meetings and interviews, and not from a coded frequency of some pre-ordained category. Nevertheless, a methodological guideline, in the form of field notes and questionnaires, was needed to address and manage conversation and dialogue. The field experience and the fact that I was born and grew up in the city helped me built up a portrait of the world being studied, one incident and one extended interpretation at a time through which cultural meanings in the form of attitudes, motivations, expectations and frustrations were shared. Methods to evaluate people's attitudes were developed from a psychophysical perspective, with interpretation by the facilitator and other field workers. I tried to determine a quantifiable

level of interpretation of these attitudes (only in its affective aspect) that the subjects verbalized regarding a series of affirmations addressed during local events and interviews. The method quantified how favorable or not the person's attitude was regarding certain issues, identifying his or her opinion within a previously determined continuum (Cueli 1975). The construction of models or more statistical inference was based on interpretive analogy of process between parallel cases; cases with common and relevant characteristics that contributed to the interpretation of results and consequences for the local people. Perhaps, in the effort, the task could have run the risk of personal interpretation of a verbal expression, attitude or concern.

Regarding evaluation, the continuous cycle of study-reflection-action in the research involved formative education as its essence. The purpose of the evaluation was to benefit the participants themselves—the beneficiaries, the program, or local development practitioners—and testing the subjective implications of the participatory process. In this stage of the project, when a study-reflection-action approach is conducted, the members of the community learn how to act together when they relate their issues to the public agents, when they organize the attention of the community toward these matters, or when they organize and even lead meetings. I attempted to register how the process could develop trust, capacities and a sense of ownership of the program. At the same time, I attempted to determine how local development practitioners improved their personal skills and capabilities, as well as their perception of the reality, needs, and feelings of the beneficiaries. At each level, I recorded and assessed indicators about the beneficiaries and coordinators of the plan.

Indicators associated with the beneficiaries

- The social-economic condition of the household
- The level of participation prior to and after the experience

- Changes in attitude toward other members of the community, their families and themselves, external agents (government agents, NGOs), and the planning process itself
- Identification with their solidarity group
- Identification of partner institutions

Indicators associated with the Coordinators of the plan

- The state of their knowledge and understanding of the population to attend
- The attitudes toward this social group, and their capacity to design instruments of dialogue and to share information
- The capacity to facilitate the participation of the community in the development initiative
- Self-critical awareness
- The capacity of partner institutions to work more effectively

Conclusions of the research process arose from the interpretation of field notes compiled in 45 meetings and community workshops during the period 2002–2004 and during 15 citizenship education workshops and self-reflection discussions of the work group. At the same time, my permanent attendance of the program’s management committee meetings, the planning and monitoring group, contributed to recognize the outcomes and achievements of Ciudadanía Plena even more.

I interpreted these results from a greater perspective of participation using the information gathered in two participatory evaluation sessions carried out at the end of 2003 and at the end of 2004 which I attended as a passive observer. In the same way, and preserving the privacy of the interviewees, I was able to analyze the qualitative

information contributed by the group of beneficiaries that I interviewed in their own houses.

VALIDITY

In order to clarify my position with regard to internal validity of the process, I as the researcher was only partially involved or committed to a member's perspective. I assumed a membership role respecting the principles of participant observation, especially because I volunteered at the HABITAT-LUZ Foundation and went through the same induction as other members of the team. I noticed how participation in core activities produced on my person a high level of trust and acceptance, but I made clear to the group that I retained a research identity and periodically withdrew from the field to take notes, analyze and reflect on the situations observed.

I introduced myself to the staff team and let them know that I was conducting the field research as part of the activities of my dissertation. I asked for permission to observe and register the information I thought was necessary to support my investigation, which they approved without any kind of restriction. Therefore interviewing was structured around a method that promoted a sensitive and mutually beneficial dialogue. At that point, I shared with them the main research main but, in order to control bias, I kept privacy over specific issues concerning informants' personal identities, interpretations, expectations, and personal learning and reflections, elements that I used to evaluate and prove my hypotheses.

I always felt motivated to go beyond the academic scope of my research and the compromise I had with myself. I shared such participatory principles with the staff team, which I was looking at as it evolved, its transformations in methods and procedures, institutional cultures and personal behavior and attitudes (stated by Blackburn and Chambers 1998 as part of the organizational development approach). Even though I

waited until I finished the writing of the document to provide full comments and recommendations, I shared my findings and observations with the group as they were produced. At this point, I needed to address another concern I had while conducting the research. After all, I could not hide the fact that all my former education and professional background came from architecture and not from fields such as sociology, psychology or anthropology, which placed a lot of anxiety and doubts in interpreting outcomes.

My technical and positivistic observation of problems, processes and solutions suffered a constant conflict of interpretation while attempting to evaluate individual subjective perspectives and not pragmatic and tangible dwelling or urban design solutions. Nevertheless, this physical dimension of local development also offered an insight to the decision-making processes of the local people with whom I got involved and who fully accepted me because of my academic and unbiased interests. My background was further evident when, despite my first interest in addressing qualitative indicators, I decided to assess the quantitative results of the household survey, comparing tangibles indicators and their impact on both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

I am sure how much my personality affected what was seen and heard, but I was always aware of my personal expectations. My own enthusiasm for the community development movement may have distorted my understandings in unknown ways. Nevertheless, following my inquiry, I clearly indicated in the text my interpretations and what the local people expressed in their own words as far as it was editorially practical.

Chapter 4: Case Study: “Promotion of Full Citizenship as a mechanism for overcoming poverty in Maracaibo, Venezuela”.

This chapter begins with the introduction of a group of local development initiatives in the Latin American region promoted by the Urban Management Program for Latin America and the Caribbean, UMP-LAC, which have sought to strengthen local capacities to manage cities. Among those experiences, I fully described the Program “Promotion of Full Citizenship” within the contextual reality of urban poverty and local government management in Maracaibo, a city with 40% of its population living in extreme poverty. The program’s origins and philosophy, as well as its main characteristics and specific areas of intervention are described. However, more importantly, the chapter documents the partnership approach implemented through strategic alliances between the municipal government, non-governmental organizations, academic actors, and the organized communities for understanding and action toward the complexity of urban poverty. My research seeks to establish how the program pursues the transformation of individuals by documenting how the process developed in four low-income communities. I do this in an effort to allow beneficiaries, as members of their own communities, to reflect on their attitudes and to change their thinking from the belief that they live in “scarcity” to “abundance”, and to become effective leaders in their own families and communities. This chapter also describes the methodological steps used to evaluate the impact of the program Promotion of the Full Citizenship on the beneficiaries in correlation with the answers that they offered in group meetings, workshops, and interviews.

ANTECEDENTS. THE UNITED NATIONS URBAN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN.

The Urban Management Program for Latin America and the Caribbean (UMP) (*Programa de Gestión Urbana para America Latina y el Caribe*, PGU-ALC) was a United Nations Development Program initiative that sought to strengthen local capacities to manage cities by supporting their efforts toward sustainable human development. The program was carried out by the United Nations' Center for Human Settlements (UNCHS-HABITAT) from its regional office in Quito, Ecuador, and was the result of the joint cooperation between the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), bilateral and multilateral institutions such as the GTZ from Germany, or the IDRC from Canada, and local governments throughout the region that financially support projects and plans.

The UMP-LAC's main goal was the creation of a solid citizen base to support local governments of the region in the development of plans and actions to overcome poverty. This United Nations' program focused on the eradication of poverty, the improvement of environmental urban management, the promotion of participatory governance at the local level, and the strengthening of gender equity (PGU 2003).

The promotion of local participatory governance, the eradication of urban poverty, and the improvement management in cities constitute the main axes of UMP... along with the building of social and gender equity. In working towards meeting these objectives, UMP promotes the use and equal and efficient distribution of resources and mobilizes the capacities of individuals, communities, public, private and volunteer organizations and, especially, local (Quintero 2001: ii).

The UMP-LAC stated, as specific lines of action associated with the eradication of poverty, the integral improvement of low-income urban settlements or barrios, credit access credit for the poor, local economic development, and access to urban services for the most vulnerable groups. In regard to the promotion of local governability, the areas of interest included the institutionalization of participatory processes, participatory and

multicultural governability, and participatory budgeting. In Venezuela, the cities of Ciudad Guayana in the state of Bolivar, and Maracaibo in the state of Zulia, received the support of the UMP-LAC to develop local programs with these goals. Both cities were part of a first group of cities chosen in the region.

The UMP-LAC acted mainly through the action of its local and regional associates whose capacity was strengthened. In this way, a series of programs were developed in the region, whose contributions favored the exchange of knowledge and experiences. Looking at a group of 40 programs supported by the UMP-LAC²⁵, one can draw conclusions from the results and input of the international development agency in the Latin American region with special reference to those projects in which the participation of beneficiaries demonstrated achievements in social aspects linked to institutional participation.

Table 6: UMP-LAC strategic areas of investment and support.

AREAS OF INVESTMENT	TYPE OF PROJECT
Start from the cities and the social actors	Urban consultation Action plans
Transform current conditions with programs and policies	Priority action programs
Develop and strengthen urban thinking	Management of knowledge
Mobilize urban actor locally, regionally and nationally.	Influence agenda setting
Achieve sustainability of regional agenda	Institutional framework

Source: PGU 2003.

²⁵ The experiences are described in a PGU publication in spanish: *Consultas Urbanas, Hacia una Gestión Urbana Participativa en Ciudades Latinoamericanas y del Caribe* (PGU-ALC 2001).

Despite the transformation in 2004 of the UMP-LAC into a NGO with limited funding, and the impossibility of its participation in the program, Ciudadanía Plena²⁶, as it was envisioned in Maracaibo, has been an approach to community development that conceived the individual as a subject of interaction and not as an object of intervention. Such interaction seeks the acceptance of beneficiaries as active partners in the development process in opposition to the interventionist approach, which looks at individuals responding only to a cause-effect stimulus. The Venezuelan experience has implied the implementation of strategies to strengthen the social co-responsibility. This has allowed the use of social actors' own resources to achieve sustainable local development, both physical and human. UMP-LAC supported other experiences that followed a similar motivation. These experiences developed their own local results based on comparable indicators and methodologies.

One of these experiences describes a neighborhood improvement project in the Colonia Mesa de Hornos, (pop. 6.594) in Mexico City²⁷. The project sought to change the traditional relations among the local government and residents by advising social organizations in the formulation of projects. After the evaluation phase of the program, the local groups recognized that...

...the planning process does not automatically imply a process of strengthening of the civil society... It is necessary to develop in parallel activities... If the participation is not clearly established, it can therefore politicize the demand, because the public is seen as an arena to demand solutions and not as a space of co-responsibility (PGU-ALC 2001: 15).

²⁶ The program was first named *Promotion of citizenship as a mechanism for overcoming poverty* but in subsequent meetings the partner institutions agreed to change its name to *Promotion of citizenship* to avoid the direct association with the terms *poverty* or *social exclusion*.

²⁷ Project name: *Mejora integral de un barrio en Mesa de los Hornos* (México). Partner institutions: Non-governmental organizations, local government and community-based organizations.

The main objectives of the Mexican experience were; first, transforming the traditional government-citizen relationship model by promoting a more democratic and horizontal approach; second, improving the living conditions of residents; and third, strengthening the notion of development as a common process between all actors. The program pursued these objectives by promoting the negotiation of urban services with the participation of the community and advising a methodological model for comprehensive urban improvement of the neighborhoods. The achievements related to advances in the consolidation of the democratic culture of citizens by means of an incipient recovery of the concept of public good, beyond the purely social or governmental vision. The new relation between the government, the citizens, and the social organizations reached certain consensus and the legitimization of the project (ETSAM_a 2000).

As quoted in the preceding chapters, the participation of public institutions and local government is necessary but the achievement of goals and objectives depends, for the most part, on the commitment and reflection of participants during the process of coordination and appropriation of the proposed models. People in the small city of Cartago in Costa Rica (pop. 52.243) have also agreed to support a partnership scheme that has integrated members of society in local government management through processes of consultation. According to the UMP-LAC, since the beginning, the consultation has been...

...a series of learnings for all; for the community in its organizational, management, mobilization, and empowerment aspects... but above all, to know which are its potentials and limitations. A series of learnings for the institutions because it has permitted to conceive new styles of work in which the instruments of planning utilized by the community have privilege (PGU-ALC 2001, 27).

Another local development project, this time in the Colombian city of Neiva²⁸, has shown how the participatory processes have revitalized the local identity. A UMP-sponsored program in the *Comuna 10*, which grouped a series of low-income neighborhoods and a population of 38,794 inhabitants, has been able to join efforts in the formulation of a comprehensive local development project, which has been possible to materialize mainly due to a high degree of cohesion and self-recognition within the population. The work transcended locally-based achievements to become determinant in the definition of policies at the Municipal level. Consequently, the municipality approved a local decree to improve low-income neighborhoods in the city.

The methodology applied in the Colombian experience incorporated citizenship education for the self-recognition of people's identity, the building up of new physical infrastructure, the implementation of participatory evaluations and decision-making, and the intervention of public and private actors following a partnership approach. The strategy had objectives of achieving and preserving the continuity, transparency, and legitimacy of the public policy, and strengthening local leadership and a sense of belonging. Outcomes demonstrated that the organization and participation of the community were strengthened, as was people's capacity to formulate and legitimize new ideas through local consultation, round table negotiation and consensus. These events provided the community with an opportunity to acknowledge the development process and to sustain financially local physical improvements (ETSAM_b 2000).

In the same way, an institutional change has been possible in the small city of Neiva, Quito, Ecuador, which established an institutional framework of local government that is flexible, open, and transparent. The political will of the local authority and the

²⁸ Project name: *Gestión urbana y gobierno participativo* (Neiva, Colombia). Partner institutions: Non-governmental organizations, national government, local government and community-based organizations, private sector.

institutional capacity for change are key factors in the constant search for a participatory management system for the Metropolitan District. Another experience, this time in Cochabamba, Bolivia, showed that the real commitment of local authorities and a positive attitude on part of the national and local counterparts constituted key elements to achieve similar success in local initiatives (PGU-ALC 2001, 65).

A social inclusion and popular participation program in the *favelas* of the Municipality of Santo André (pop. 625.564) in the metropolitan area of Sao Paulo, Brazil, assists a population of approximately 17,500 persons with the belief that the participation of the previously excluded is important, and that, besides their participation, the program should provide them with training (*capacitación*) to facilitate their insertion into the labor market and exercise of citizenship. It has been necessary to establish mechanisms to facilitate people's access to information, the communication within the community, and the cultural exchange in the city. Lessons drawn from the experience suggests how the program has taken into account the community learning process in each of the subprograms that have been developed and the pedagogical aspects of the communities as a fundamental element for its social inclusion.

"The Citizenship has no size" (PGU-ALC 2001, 72) is the name used to identify a citizen education program directed to youths and children of Barra Mansa, in Brazil, sought to stimulate their participation in urban management through the development of their capacities as citizen; enhancing their interpretation of ownership in the community, the city and the country. In this experience, adults also learn and have the opportunity to reflect on and expand their citizenship practices. As a result, the project has allowed the elevation of self-esteem and motivation in youths in regards to municipal life.

Garcia (2003) evaluated cases in Mexico, Colombia, Argentina and Peru, and concluded that the provision of economic and logistical resources—both human and financial—to sustain activities, were highly dependent on the local government authorities. Analyzing people's responses, Garcia also recognized that these authorities made significant contributions when calling meetings, supplying information, coordinating and mediating. Likewise, the role of the community organizations was important for the promotion of the experiences locally, especially during the initial and final phases. These groups also provided information during the phase of evaluation and were able to put into practice communication strategies.

Results indicated that the NGOs needed to strengthen their organizational structures to incorporate pedagogical material of support and to have personnel capable of making proper use of it. At the same time, neighborhood organizations needed to develop skills and have access to the appropriate means to improve their efforts. Generally, according to these groups, participation was high and stable when supplying information and they reached their highest level of self-management during the planning phases. They recognized that their participation during the consultation was also high but more notable during the evaluation phase (Garcia 2000, 31).

In Cordoba, Argentina, the community organizations had an offer of permanent training in different subjects: planning, organization and community management, comparative assessment, or social communication. In Neiva, Colombia, the groups had access to the "School of Leadership", which increased awareness of collective issues. In Mesa de Hornos, Mexico, the consciousness building and training of a series of actors allowed the formulation and execution of other projects. At last, in Peru, the researcher's findings demonstrated that actors gained new knowledge in terms of neighborhood improvement and project management.

Following a comparable philosophy, seen in the evaluation of these Latin American experiences, the program “Promotion of Full Citizenship” in Maracaibo is also concerned with the education of low-income people and with the improvement of their condition as citizens. As part of the array of local development projects backed up by the UMP-LAC, the Venezuelan experience has had a unique opportunity to introduce training processes to make a way into people’s consciousness and self-determination, to reflect on citizen’s values, to confront the reality of participation locally and to initiate from the household a deep process of motivation and productivity. The program, the case study of this investigation, its contextual frame and its targeted population are explained in more detail in the following section.

THE CITY OF MARACAIBO: URBAN POVERTY, HOUSING AND CITIZENSHIP.

Maracaibo, Capital of the State of Zulia, at the northwestern side of Venezuela²⁹, is the second largest city after Caracas³⁰ and an important commercial trade center for the oil industry. With the development of a petroleum-oriented economy during the 1900s, the city grew from a small group of blocks confined to the historic center to what it is today an urban center with a population of almost 1.6 million people. The city is subdivided into two municipalities: Maracaibo to the north, with 393 square kilometers, and San Francisco to the south, with an area of 174 square kilometers. (Alcaldía de Maracaibo 2000).

The process of urbanization of Maracaibo has been peripheral and marginal, informal or uncontrolled settlements have surpassed the number and capacity of controlled and regulated settlements. According to national statistics, Maracaibo is one of the cities with greater poverty levels (Table 7). In 2003, 70% of its urban land (12

²⁹ Total population of Venezuela in 1998: 23.242.535 inhabitants, in 2001: 23,054,210 (INE 2002). Total population of the State of Zulia: 2.983.679 inhabitants (the most populated State of the country) (INE 2002); 89.6% urban, 10.4% rural (Atlas del Estado Zulia 1998).

³⁰ The population of metropolitan Caracas accounted for four million inhabitants in 1990 (Lovera 1998).

thousand hectares) was occupied by 250 informal settlements³¹ making up 8,665 hectares (PDUM 2003). More recently, a study conducted by the University of Zulia in 2005 pointed out that the number of barrios in the two municipalities has effectively increased to 282 barrios within the official urban limits (Arquiluz 2005). The highest number of informal settlements is concentrated in the Municipality of Maracaibo (228), mostly in the periphery of the city, which exhibits informal real estate activity and limited intervention by the State.

The same study points out that a more critical and unsustainable condition is present when 113 additional barrios located in the urban protection zone add to a total of 395 barrios (Figure 3 shows the location of barrios in the city and in the urban protection zone). In general, the condition of informal and unplanned occupation of land in these settlements has resulted in a low population density of 68 inhabitants per hectare. Almost two-thirds of the total urban population (64.24%) live in these types of communities which feel the lack of government attention (Echeverría 1995).

The fact that 39.8% of the city's population lives in extreme poverty³² and demands attention affects the effectiveness of urban development plans. The inhabitants of these areas lack basic social services and infrastructure, are unemployed or underemployed, and cannot effectively satisfy basic needs such as housing or health. In addition to this complex urban reality, the deterioration of the living conditions and the increasing environmental and physical degradation add to the generally awkward social condition and the already difficult task of managing the city.

³¹ Poor urban shantytown: *barrios* in Venezuela, *colonias* in Mexico, *favelas* in Brazil, or *villas miserias* in Argentina.

³² OCEI-Programa SIGEL - CONZUPLAN 2000.



Figure 2: Map of Venezuela and location of the city of Maracaibo.

Table 7: Population growth in the city of Maracaibo.

	1981*	% OF TOTAL	1990*	% OF TOTAL	2001**	% OF TOTAL
Venezuela	14,516,735	100.00	18,105,265	100.00	23,054,210	100.00
Caracas	2,070,742	14.3	2,103,661	11.6	2,813,088	12.22
Maracaibo	899,981	6.20	1,249,670	6.90	1,571,885	6.82

* Boueiri 1997: 55

** INE: <http://www.ine.gov.ve/ine/censo/fichascenso/fichacenso.asp> (Last visited: September, 4th, 2006).

The lack of dignified housing affects families' health, since their homes do not even offer the minimum space required to shelter one person and barely have basic sanitary services, such as clean water and sewers, thus producing a number of diseases. In this regard, it has been affirmed that the dwelling, as the human-made shelter, must provide the conditions to develop all the activities and offer the comfort conditions that allow its residents to recover their mental and physical health. This is possible if the unit can define a practical and comfortable space concerning the specific needs of the family. However, private sector interventions in the low-income housing sector and its design criteria are associated with economic aspects that leave aside the repercussion of people's participation and environmental effects. Moreover, in uncontrolled urban zones like these, housing solutions show architectural poverty and low quality and usually do not meet the modest goal of providing a comfortable space, even when modest (González 2000).

The *barrio* and self-help housing have become the most common means of obtaining shelter. Large numbers of people live in settlements of this kind, whose number has increased over time. *Barrios* in Maracaibo, as in many Latin American cities, begin as rudimentary shelters without services and are developed on land which either lacks planning permission or which has been occupied illegally. A majority of the self-help homes improve or consolidate after some confidence is shown. However, some shelters do not look better a few years later. Through time, the occupier may progressively build all the accommodations. As a result, residents gradually transform the settlements into consolidated neighborhoods. Ideally, electricity and water are installed (usually by the government), roads are paved and facilities such as bus service, schools, and health centers are built. The community evolves and is no longer the shantytown seen after the first invasion. The critical ingredient is money, both for locals to improve their

community and for the government to provide assistance and services. According to Gilberts (1994), families with savings can consolidate their homes quickly. Those who lack funds remain in a basic hut or fail to move into the settlement at all. Assistance is reduced and most of the communities remain unattended by the local governments. In terms of education, particularly in non-regulated urban settlements, facilities are nonexistent due to lack of investment or appropriate planning that would have included them.

In the past, three strategies have been used in order to address these problems. The first is to evict poor urban settlers and relocate them far from city centers. The second, the strategy of "clean up and redevelop," is to replace informal settlements with new housing on the same site (often with housing which the poor themselves cannot afford). The third is to upgrade existing settlements, including housing, infrastructure and services. Despite the fact that decisions and planning are made at the local level, limited access to funding in order to materialize most proposals mainly due to the current economic crisis and the delay of the central government in delivering these financial resources make the work of local and regional agencies a challenging and frustrating task. This is especially true in Maracaibo, a city that possesses the highest housing deficit of the country.

Adding to this condition is the increasing deterioration of the existing stock and the existence of a high percentage of shanty houses (15% of the total housing units). The situation of precariousness and the lack and deficiency of public utilities is aggravated due to the great territorial extension of the city, which increases enormously the costs of these services.

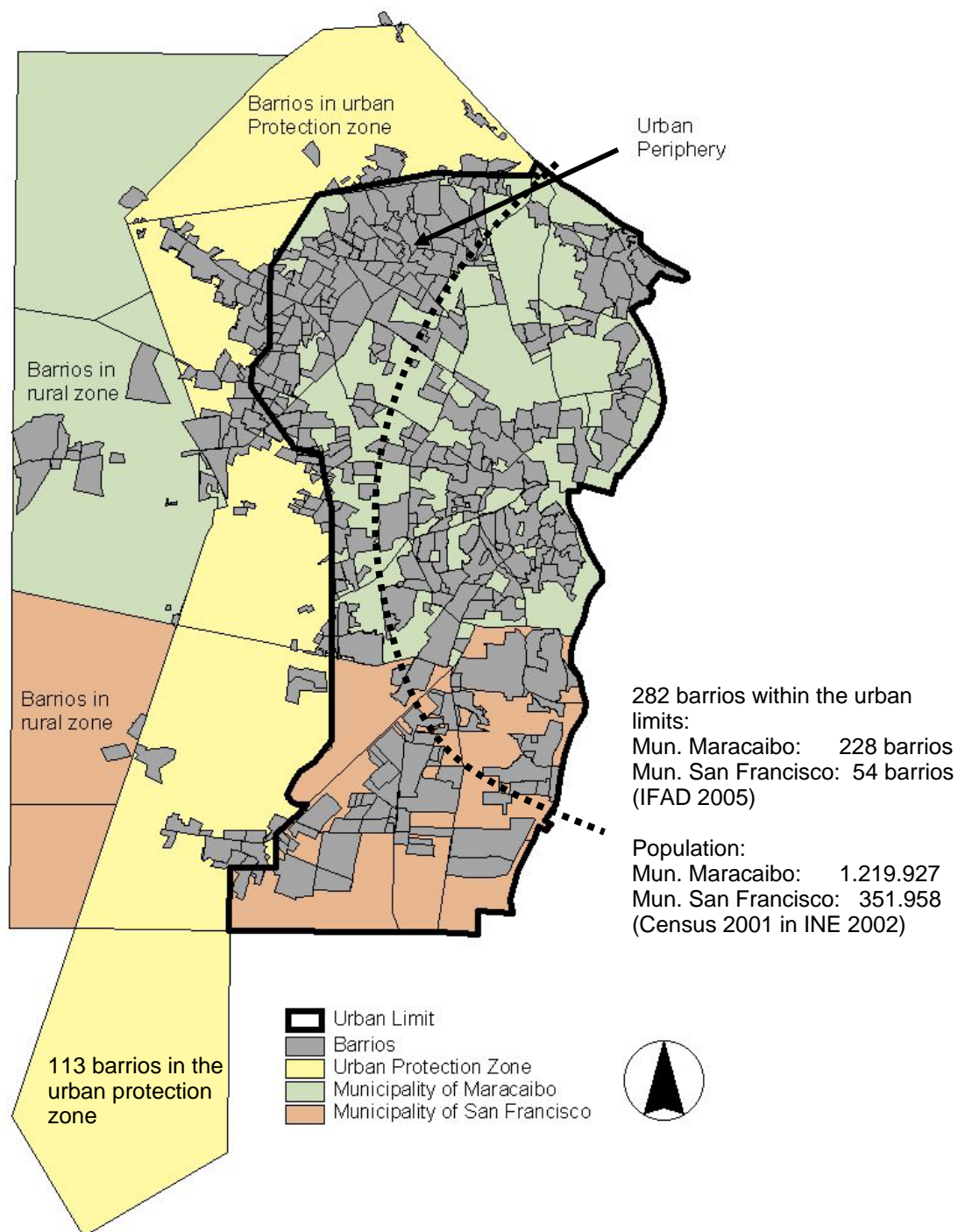


Figure 3: Maracaibo. Political subdivisions and locations of Barrios.

Source: Arquiluz - IFAD 2005, INE 2002³³

³³ To access the 2001 census results visit:
http://www.ine.gov.ve/censo/fichascenso/tiro.asp?cod_entidad=23.



Illustration 3: Maracaibo's periphery.

Source: Arquiluz - IFAD 2005.

Table 8: Population in Barrios in main Venezuelan cities (1991).

	TOTAL POP.	POP. IN BARRIOS	% OF TOTAL	AREA (HECT)	POPUL. DENSITY
Caracas	2,685,901	1,085,543	40.42	4053,22	267,82
Maracaibo	1,249,670	802,807	64,24	11,886.56	67,57
Barquisimeto	743,414	378,227	50.88	4,507.34	83.91
Valencia	903,621	465,643	51.53	5,130.5	90.76
Ciudad Guayana	465,738	225,485	48.41	7784.75	28.96

Source: OCEI, III National Barrio Inventory (in Echeverria 1995: I-6).

In addition to the role of government agencies in local planning, a new consensus highlights and acknowledges the role of non-governmental and other civil society organizations in the city not only as implementing agencies and service providers, but also as innovators and sources of new thinking, as informed critics and advocates, and policy partners. The consensus reflects an understanding that social learning is a societal issue, which concerns every citizen, and that the vision, goals, contents, processes and modalities should be discussed and negotiated through broad-based participation.

The State acknowledges that it cannot address the complex issue of citizen education alone and admits that it does not per se or exclusively know what is best for the people. Working in public-private partnership with a wide range of local organizations, community engagement will focus on developing models of social inclusion and active citizenship for marginalized communities as well as empower people to affect change in their immediate lives and within society through practical programs of knowledge and skill building.

Clearly, an effort or movement to bring this population into the sphere of citizen participation has to be made in concordance with a revalorization of citizenship and its implication for people's attitudes and values, both in urban and rural settings. However, in this case study, the scope of citizen participation as a planning component, is limited to urban low-income groups and the professionals directly associated with the Promotion of Full Citizenship Program (Programa Ciudadanía Plena).

With the belief that a shift in the development paradigm based on partnership and citizen education is possible in Venezuela, the program has been a significant undertaking as it represents an initiative placed within a theoretical framework which emphasizes a more effective role of municipal government in the way it responds to social demand, implements participatory mechanisms of consultation, and gives attention

to public-private partnerships in which organizations work together, train the community, and conduct dialogic approaches to development.

ORIGINS AND PHILOSOPHY OF “CIUDADANÍA PLENA”

In Maracaibo, the UMP-LAC first promoted the initiative in 1997. That year, the Municipality of Maracaibo, in association with the University of Zulia (LUZ) and the United Nations Urban Management/HABITAT Program, signed an intention letter in which the agencies agreed to develop a housing improvement and micro-credit program in which interaction with local communities was be considered a necessary component. Soon after, other stakeholders joined the initiative and agreed to participate in the preparation and implementation of the plan.

The following year the municipal authorities invited other non-governmental organizations to joint in the effort. These NGOs included the *Escuela de Vecinos de Venezuela* (*School of Neighbors of Venezuela*³⁴) and *Nuevo Amanecer-CESAP*.

In July of that same year, the Municipality of Maracaibo, with Nuevo Amanecer-CESAP, the HABITAT-LUZ foundation and the organized communities officially endorsed the program. In 1999, the University of Zulia was appointed as the responsible coordinator of the program, but a later decision recommended a joint coordination in the form of an executive committee. Each partner, considering its strength and experience, would define, through their contribution, convenient strategies to achieve the proposed goals. In these terms, the Program’s vision and essential goal were finally established as:

The development of alternatives for the attention of the poor at the municipal level on the basis of local, civic and institutional consultation, through the definition of a strategic alliance between governmental, non-governmental, and

³⁴ Since 1980, the School of Neighbors of Venezuela has promoted citizen education in participation and has tried to defeat the traditional clientelism, with insistence in learning the management of the solution of problems and establishing networks. Community organizations have started establishing links and strategic alliances among them with more local, regional, and national coordination.

academic actors for the understanding and action toward the complexity of the urban management. (Alcaldía Municipio Maracaibo 2001).

From January to July of 1999 the team experienced enthusiasm and dynamism, except the *Escuela de Vecinos de Venezuela*, (School of Neighbors of Venezuela), which did not achieve its complete integration with the team. Consequently, *Escuela de Vecinos* decided not to proceed as a partner and dropped out. By the end of the year, and despite some economic contributions, the level of motivation diminished, probably caused by the difficulties of encouraging motivation and carrying out training workshops, or from the still prevailing financial limitations. The participating agencies decided to carry out a pilot experience in the barrio Angelica de Lusinchí, with 10,000 inhabitants in an area of ten hectares (Gonzalez et al. 1999).

The Municipality established the selection criteria, which included the existence of infrastructure works previously completed by the municipal government in the barrio an adequate level of social integration, which would ease the implementation and help achieve the support of local groups, the precariousness of the living conditions, and a peripheral location. This first phase of the program assisted the complex housing reality in the community through intervention in the qualitative dimension of the existing problem. The approach was based on the assumption that the characterization and construction of the dwellings and the urban space were the expression of the distinct social actors.

According to the outcomes of the pilot experience, the program increased access to credit for housing improvement and bolstered previous community motivation and training on the assumption that saving is a fundamental component in the creation of such opportunities. In one year, the program granted 29 housing improvement loans and 3 production loans. From this group, more than 60% of the loans in this community had a

recovery of nearly 98%. In addition, a positive correlation between the number of workshops and the number of people integrated as beneficiaries was achieved (Gonzalez et al. 1999).

There was a positive impact in the creation and development of a community's organizational base and a substantial improvement of their habitat, not only as a direct effect of the program but also as a consequence of a more effective community management effort. In addition, 74% of the families that benefited had women as heads of household, which demonstrated the impact on gender and family relations. Results also indicated that the coordination and integration among the different actors was the strength of the program, which facilitated the process and has had in turn produced an important change in their individual culture (Gonzalez and Rincon 2004).

In 2000, the executive committee resumed meetings and Mayor Giancarlo Di Martino fully endorsed the program. Although new meetings were held, the program was delayed until March 2002 when the mayor formally and publicly authorized its implementation on a larger scale, with the presence of UMP-LAC representatives and the local partner institutions. Despite the constant delay, attributable to "the necessary bureaucratic procedures" of the municipality, Mayor Di Martino remained sympathetic with the program and was interested in its prompt implementation and expansion. Nevertheless, it was not until August 2003 when resources were transferred from the central government in Caracas to Maracaibo. The program would have never started without this funding.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROGRAM

The program, as stakeholder institutions conceived it, implies strategic alliances that seek to positively impact the current and future local urban policies in strengthening participation, the sense of ownership and the identity in local low-income settlements. It

consists of a process of articulation of responsibilities to capitalize efforts, better practices and experiences; and represents a joint venture of governmental and non-governmental, national, international, and local agents of development with the purpose of implementing a multidisciplinary approach to urban poverty (Alcaldía de Maracaibo 2000). The main purpose of “Ciudadanía Plena” has been to reinforce the exercise of rights and duties that imply full citizenship in the city, with emphasis in low-income communities, to develop a model of democratic government supported on local civic and institutional consultation and participation, through a strategic and consociated alliance (governmental, non-governmental, academic actors) in order to solve social problems of diverse nature and complexity. It is a new vision of understanding the planning and action of urban management (Gonzalez de Kauffman 2003). The program’s summary points out

the existence of a fragmented civil society, with scarce sense of belonging and social identity, weak in the exercise of their rights, adding to the augment of poverty, a high unemployment rate, a large housing deficit, the anarchic growth as result of illegal invasions, the consequent lack of access to services public, habitat deterioration, urban violence, and social injustice therefore justify the program (Alcaldía de Maracaibo 2001).

The program proposes citizenship education and the promotion of a culture of participation through the implementation of the following sub-programs:

1. *Citizenship education*, oriented toward the motivation of participants on community organization, participatory development, and the recognition of values and civil rights, with an emphasis on savings to strengthen the individual, family and community (i.e. community organization and participation) and to make them understand and recognize not only their rights but also their responsibilities in creating solutions to social problems and needs.

2. *Habitat and housing improvement*, providing small credits to low-income households and equal access to achieve better qualitative and quantitative housing conditions for the families living in areas with high poverty indexes and also to make a positive impact on the urban order and planning of Maracaibo with technical environmental and sustainable criteria.
3. *Strengthening of the local economy*, promoting and supporting creative, innovative and/or self-managed micro-enterprises; and second, creating working opportunities by means of training people on those identified priority areas of the local economy and opening employment opportunities for the low-income population by providing credits for the installation of micro-enterprises and equal access to financial and technical assistance.

The Municipality stated that, based on “its experience dealing with urban problems and constant interaction with communities”, it was able to mobilize civil society, NGOs, the private sector, and other sectors of society to join efforts to protect those who are vulnerable, particularly the poor. According to the signed agreement, the Municipal government agreed to fully support the process and designated a team of experts from the Departments of Projects and Plans, Social Development, Urban Planning, and Citizen Education and Capacity building, among others, to assist in the preparation, implementation and promotion of the program in low-income communities. Even though the indicators of poverty used in the identification of barrios to be included in the program were not clearly defined, the Municipality identified the group of communities to benefit in the second phase.

The use of a basic set of descriptive variables that characterized certain areas of the city was possible mainly due to the constant demand of the local university (LUZ) to

apply predefined indicators rather than to enforce a political decision. As a result, a group of indicators of poverty, shown in table 3 on page 103, guided the process of selection and decision-making. While there was a clear understanding of these indicators, no detailed examination of each of them in correlation with the city was found or developed for the formulation of the project. Moreover, local data for these indicators were neither accurate nor accessible. Nevertheless, a simple look at the living condition in the barrios provided a response to the quality of the indicators applied following a general interpretation of them based on local knowledge and experience in this urban setting despite the lack of local statistics, which could have supported a more scientific and structured selection.

The selection criteria considered a general appreciation of the local living conditions in the periphery of the city. Most of the barrios in Maracaibo display characteristics such as high poverty levels, low integration of the social structure or low access to formal housing markets, among others. However, a structured analysis of census data or reports of need assessments that would facilitate the initial selection criteria were difficult to accomplish due to the lack of updated and reliable information, and the promptness to initiate the experience.

The municipality made a unilateral decision following a basic assumption: the barrios should be located in four different parishes and be distant enough from each other to demonstrate a geographically equitable distribution of resources. Despite this resolution, the other partner institutions agreed because they considered that these communities, as many others were left apart in the initial stage of the program, were also in need of immediate assistance, and that geographic location in the municipality was an acceptable indicator to guide the decision.

Despite the fact that the upper-level management of the municipality has allowed unshared decisions, the partner NGOs made clear that they had advocated, at all times, the correct use of resources and the adequate acknowledgment of the conceptual basis that shaped Ciudadanía Plena since its origin.

From that initial group, the four barrios considered in the research were those in which the home improvement component was implemented, based on my interest in this particular focus . Progressively, from this starting point, other barrios have been included following an assessment of local household needs, but also responding to communities' own requests.

Table 9: Barrios chosen in the second phase of the program.

PARRISH	POPULATION IN BARRIOS	BARRIO	BARRIO POPULATION	NUMBER OF FAMILIES
Luis Hurtado Higuera	73.095	Angélica de Lusinchi (sector I)* El Gaitero	2.150	398
Coquivacoa	94.592	Rómulo Gallegos * Teotiste Gallegos Sta. Rosa de Agua Sta. Rosa de Tierra	2.283	396
Idelfonso Vásquez	62.180	23 de Marzo * Mirtha Fonseca Balmiro León Cabeza de Toro	2429	528
Antonio Borjas Romero	66.522	Miraflores * Libertador	2.766	461
Total	343.062		9.628	1.783

Source: Alcaldía de Maracaibo 2003.* Sample group

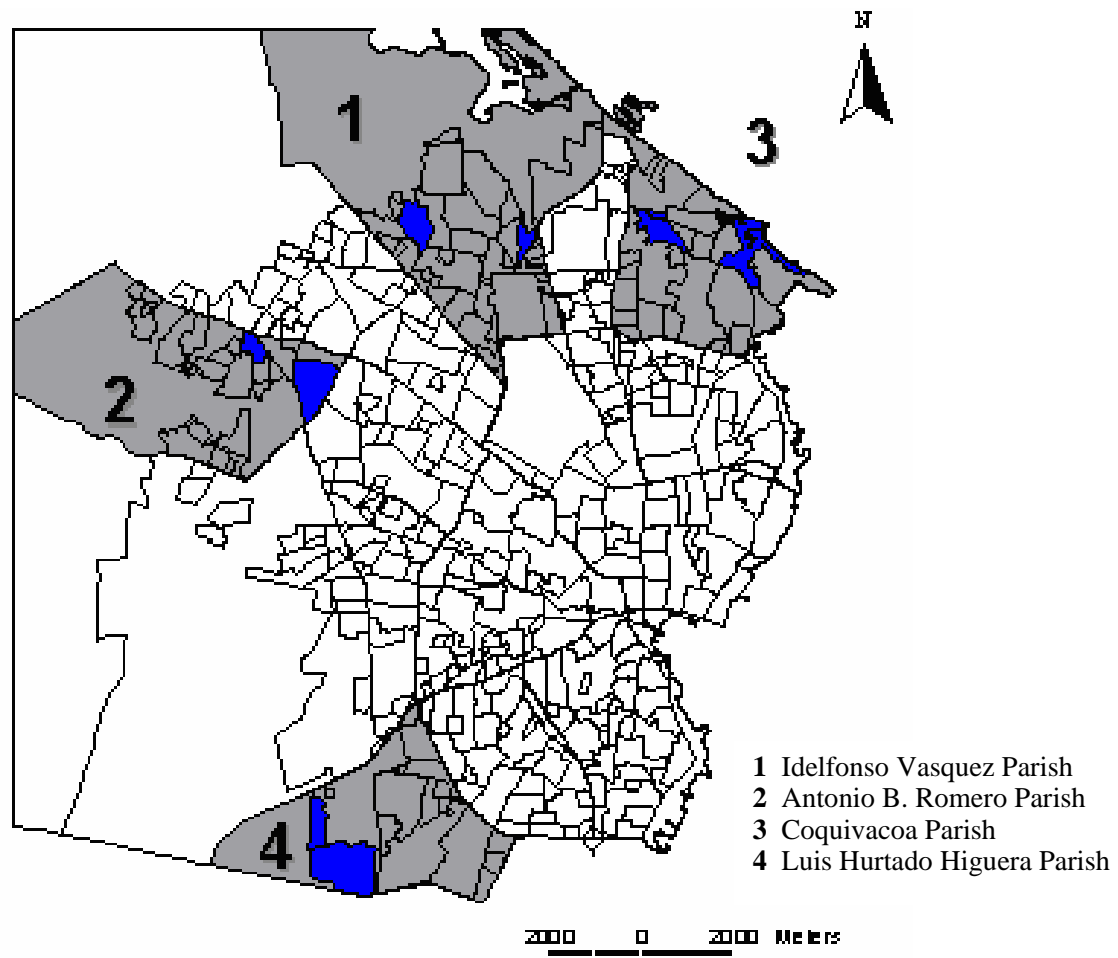


Figure 4: Municipality of Maracaibo. Parishes assisted during the initial phase of implementation and their corresponding Barrios.

DEVELOPMENT MODEL OF PARTNERSHIP

In Venezuela, Baldo and Villanueva (1997) have recommended the creation of “consortiums” or special organizations for the execution of comprehensive urban rehabilitation programs in the barrios. This has been widely promoted as an opportunity to incorporate not only the community and government but also other intermediate social development organizations and professionals in local development plans (Baldo and Villanueva 1997). These groups would understand the organizational, administrative, and

management aspects to strengthen the main goal: local and self-managed development of the communities. These consortiums exhibit the following characteristics:

- a. Impact, through the tangible improvement of life conditions.
- b. Sustainability, which refers to the changes in the management systems to assure its continuity, its long-term viability and the materialization of the initiatives.
- c. Cooperation, which refers to the inter-relationship among governments, international agencies, social development organizations, community organizations and the private sector.
- d. Promotion and training of the community.
- e. Promotion for the management of financial resources and its transparency, as a process through which the community learns to administer and watch for the fulfillment of the programs.
- f. Empowering people, transferring resources to civil society so that it administers them.
- g. Innovation, which refers to the creative resolution of problems.
- h. Training in self-management, based on the non-membership of intermediary organizations.
- i. Control, which exceeds traditional paternalistic practices.

In the Maracaibo experience, the partner institutions were able to establish an organized network of cooperation toward achieving a chosen objective, which they legitimized with the signing of the agreement and the coordination of tasks. The concept of the consortium was also incorporated. Figure 5 illustrates the relationship between the partner institutions and the compromises that each of them has assumed for one of the dimensions of the program. The University of Zulia, through the *Instituto de Investigaciones de la Facultad de Arquitectura y Diseño* (IFAD) has monitored and

systematized the experience. *Nuevo Amanecer-CESAP* has taken care of the administration and expertise of the micro-enterprise credit process and training in this area. The HABITAT-LUZ Foundation has carried out the coordination of the home improvement component, and its corresponding training program, while encouraging community members to get involved.

In the organizational structure, the municipality has acted as the general coordinator and has carried out most of the fieldwork in regard to the organization of meetings and workshops in the communities and the credit follow up. The municipality has also been the main investor as it administers all the financing and does the lobbying in Caracas. The UMP-LAC/HABITAT was always an external advisor and international sponsor with limited opportunities to fund the initiative. Finally, the organized communities have been the most important actors as the other institutions, community leaders and organizations have worked to promote and implement the program in their area.

All these actors have also been included in the different instances of management and decision-making. An administrative committee determines the general policies and operational procedures and makes the general financial decisions. A management committee (*Comité de Gestión*) plans the activities and tasks of the institutions on a weekly basis. Finally, the community assembly acts as the main body. It sets the principles of the program in each community and should promote and facilitate implementation locally.

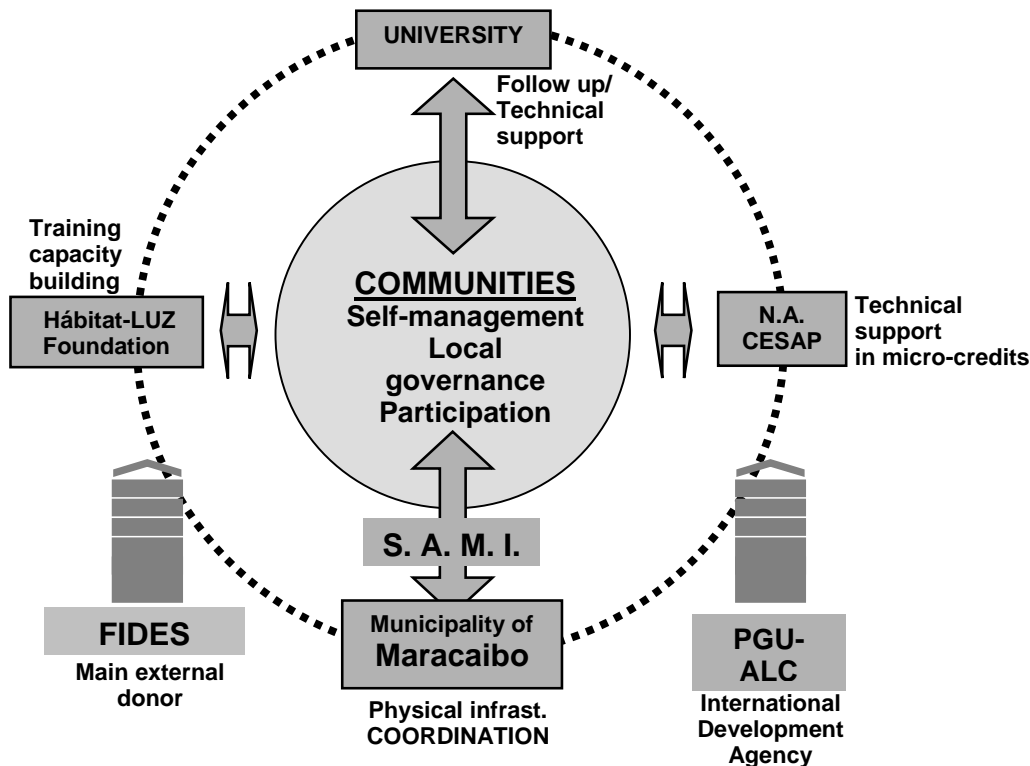


Figure 5: Participation of partner institutions in the Full Citizenship Program.

Source: Adapted from Gonzalez 2003

The main financial support came from the municipality, with resources from the Investment Fund for Decentralization, FIDES, *Fondo Intergubernamental para la Descentralización*. The fact that FIDES had never financed proposals other than for infrastructure caused a two-year delay. FIDES persistently reviewed the program proposal between 2001 and 2003 (twelve times in that period) before it finally approved and subsequently financed the implementation in August 2003. The delay was caused by the fact that FIDES had never financed a project which considered the social dimension of citizenship education as a requirement for local development, a strategic piece of the project that needed to be directly financed by the government. FIDES never endorsed such innovation in local development projects and delayed approval for discussions and

observations on this issue. Consequently, citizen education was not financed with national resources. The top-down approach of FIDES, based on physical development and not linked to education and individual development may have contributed to the negative response.

Before 2003, some preliminary activities were carried out by the municipality and the partner NGOs using their own resources, approximately US \$12,000. These activities included introductory community meetings, planning meetings, and a social-economic survey in a group of barrios.

The functions and main attributions of the institutions and organizations associated with the program are explained next.

Main financing agency: FIDES (Fondo Intergubernamental para la Descentralización) – Decentralization Fund.

The Governmental Fund for the Decentralization (FIDES) is an autonomous official office, directly dependent on the Ministry of Planning and Development, without legal status, but with financial and functional autonomy that has the responsibility of providing financial and technical assistance towards the process of decentralization and the development of States and Municipalities through the adequate channeling of resources according to the priorities established by the three levels of government (FIDES 2000).

Any organized group whose aspiration is to achieve benefits for its community can participate and request funding. Those projects that favor the decentralization of social services, contribute to the permanent generation of employment in the communities, elevate the quality of life of citizens, and favor the transfer of technology to the communities are mainly considered.

FIDES has established that at least 20% of the resources, distributed annually among the states and municipalities, be directed to projects presented by the communities, neighborhood associations, and non-governmental organizations that can prove their legal status. Moreover, the projects that are presented by the organized communities should count on the approval of, at least, 20% of the residents of the sector in which they will be implemented while projects that are submitted by neighborhood associations must count on the approval of the simple majority of its board of directors. When an NGO submits a project for consideration, it should demonstrate that it is targeted to a population in need. Likewise, FIDES establishes that at least 20% of the resources assigned annually to regional and city governments must be allocated to projects presented by the organized communities, neighborhood associations, and not governmental organizations.

Implementing and administrative agency: the Maracaibo's Municipal government through the "Autonomous Micro-financing Service, SAMI".

It is in the interest of the partner institutions that the administration of the program fall to the hands of the local government, since the municipality, as they have stated, is responsible for the effective development of the city and its communities. In this regard, the organizations of civil society must accompany the municipality in the effort. As a public local policy toward community-based credit, an operational mechanism is institutionalized with the creation of a pseudo-autonomous office—SAMI—which administers the financing and manages the activities from its facilities in the municipal building.

Because of its financial dependency, it was not until 2003 that SAMI officially started operating, when the transfer of capital investment from FIDES in Caracas became

effective. The program, represented by the municipality, created a fund, from which loans had to be granted to each beneficiary. This procedure minimized the risk of corruption and misuse of these financial resources.

The fund permits the maintenance and financial sustainability of the program. It has benefited an initial number of communities but also other communities and families that have expressed their interest in becoming associates of the training and credit program. This financing service is legally administered by a president appointed by the city Mayor and a board of directors, in which the different organizations are represented. SAMI, in addition to its administrative responsibilities, coordinates the first training module in the communities, coordinates the logistics of every meeting and workshop, and keeps constant record of each beneficiary.

Partner non-governmental organization: Asociación Civil Nuevo Amanecer – CESAP.

This NGO is a private organization constituted in January of 1992 and affiliated with the group CESAP (*Centro al Servicio de la Acción Popular*), a consortium of 27 associations that operate in different regions of Venezuela. These associations carry on projects that seek the strengthening of social actors, working in partnership with public and private groups or organizations that work with local development initiatives for the achievement of the common social welfare. They promote values of justice, liberty, responsibility, respect, uprightness and solidarity in Venezuelan society.

The organization carries out a diverse array of programs and projects in the areas of income and employment generation (support for the economic management; citizenship, justice and peace, communication for participation); human development, development and quality of life (healthy community, the school and its people, water, leaders in prevention, culture in the street); and social management (methodologies for

participation, formulation and implementation of social projects, organizational development, leadership and community management).

In 1995, the NGO signed an agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank to develop a micro-financing program in low-income urban areas of the state of Zulia, and created a development credit fund to enhance opportunities for small business owners and to respond more efficiently to existing demand. That year the program already had a total of 560 active clients, an amount that increased in 2000 to 678 clients. With this and other experiences, the NGO represented an opportunity and an advantage to *Ciudadanía Plena*.

Non-governmental organization partner: The University of Zulia.

Since the University of Zulia is a state-funded institution, but autonomous, it has become the perfect setting to develop and carry out community development projects without political interference. In addition to its independent status, there is an increasing trend among scholars to become more sensitive to the local urban reality and to interact with the final recipients of these projects. As a response to this trend towards sustainable urban development, the School of Architecture, in conjunction with FUNDALUZ, a University-based foundation, created the HABITAT-LUZ foundation as an external agency where professors, students and external professionals can put into practice their academic knowledge with the hope of contributing to and positively impacting the surrounding environment. At the school, academic activities are accordingly linked to research and external services to communities and the government.

The School of Architecture and Design also has a research center (IFAD), which focuses on the study of community and regional planning issues, and environment analysis. IFAD represents the academic sector of the University of Zulia in *Ciudadanía*

Plena. The institution has appointed a coordinator to represent the interests of the University in the program. In addition to the support that the center has given to the program, other topics associated with the objectives of the program have been studied as well. These have included the evaluation of the physical progressiveness of dwellings, the quality of the construction processes, building and associative strategies, the impact of the Venezuelan economic crisis after the 2002 national strike on the direct beneficiaries of the plan, and the environmental assessment of communities, among others.

Non-governmental organization partner: The HABITAT-LUZ foundation.

The HABITAT-LUZ foundation is part of the group of university-based organizations (foundations and enterprises) that the academic institutions coordinate on different areas to assist or advice the local, national and international society, such as health, social work, agriculture and production, housing development, the oil industry, etc.

Since its creation in 1995, the foundation offers aid and integral technical support to local communities by advising and training in their organization of social, legal, administrative, technical-constructive and financial areas, with the purpose of achieving the objectives presented by their residents in relation to their form of life, dwelling, infrastructure services and collective urban equipment in order to achieve a worthy and exemplary habitat. The personnel that work in the foundation come from the School of Architecture and Design of University of Zulia; professors who dedicate part of their academic time to contribute to the NGO and the programs it executes.

Today, the School of Architecture and Design is responsible for the managing and coordination of the foundation, in which professors and students are invited to participate and contribute their technical knowledge in community-based projects linked

to housing construction, technology innovation, and architectural design, with special attention to low-income communities.

Most members of HABITAT-LUZ participate actively in Ciudadanía Plena, and have specific responsibilities and duties as members of the program's management team, the decision-making board, or facilitators of workshops in the communities. Despite its association with the local University, the non-governmental organization depends almost entirely on the financial resources generated by the services it provides.

The communities in the periphery. The barrios.

The number of Barrios in Maracaibo, and specifically in the Municipality of Maracaibo, is dramatically high. An effective urban integration of the continuously growing number of barrios—282 within the urban limits and more than a hundred in the urban protection zone (Figure 3 in page 131)—has represented a difficult task to accomplish. Despite this strong limitation, the partner institutions, which focused their initial phase or pilot experience within the urban limits in only one community, initiated a more comprehensive implementation of the program in twelve communities, including the first one. The chosen group is located in the periphery of the city, predominantly poor, within the official municipal jurisdiction. From that number, the following four communities were those that showed the highest number of initial applicants and requests for housing improvement loans. Most of the institutional attention was placed in these barrios from 2002 to 2004 and the majority of the events and encounters that I witnessed occurred there. The motivation that guided the attention and further dedication in these barrios was based on the need to materialize an ideal that was expected to expand in the future in order to reach other barrios. A description of their general characteristics, some photographs and the layout maps offer an overview of their extension, physical

conditions, population and problems. Following this description, a comparative table is presented to summarize these indicators (Table 10).

Barrio Miraflores

This barrio, located in Antonio Borjas Romero Parrish in the western periphery of the city, developed from irregular land occupation, i.e. invasion, and has consolidated over time. It housed a population of 2766 inhabitants and a total of 461 housing units in 2002 when the program was introduced. It occupies an extension of 23.1 hectares (56.8 acres) and has a population density of 120 persons/ha (49 persons/acre). The mean number of household members is 6. The neighborhood is characterized by a homogeneous urban fabric, defined by a subdivided lot structure and a dense grain. Until 2003, streets remained unpaved and it was difficult to drive around the barrio. In subsequent years, most of them were paved by the municipality, an event that was seen by residents as a successful accomplishment of the community association. Despite this achievement, the road infrastructure had failures, but was adequate according to neighbor opinion. Sidewalks and curbs have been built but various street sections remain incomplete. At the same time, sidewalks do not comply with the minimum comfort and accessibility requirements. The street pattern is organized following a grid system, but it shows few streets with an irregular layout, especially one that runs through a natural water drainage that was occupied also by dwellers. The neighborhood is served by public transportation that runs at walking distance; nevertheless it lacks good quality.

In general, most of the lots are privately owned because residents have received legal titles from the Zulia State Government, who originally had possession of the land. When the research started, others residents were negotiating the legalization of their land and all dwellers in illegal condition were informed about their status. Few lots remained vacant in the area. The predominant land use is residential, while commercial activity is

found in small proportion and dispersed, operating mainly within the dwelling. Other identified uses are religious and governmental (one police facility that had remained closed for years). The neighborhood and its immediate surroundings lack educational facilities. The inhabitants have expressed the need for medical assistance and daycare for their children. One basketball court provides an enclosed space for gathering and recreation but does not meet the total recreational needs of the community.



Illustration 4: Dwelling built with disposal material in barrio Miraflores.



Illustration 5: Unpaved roads in barrio Miraflores in 2002.

Not all the households are provided with water infrastructure and the service is qualified as deficient, although some projects have been proposed to supply the service. The same problem exists with regard to the sewer system, which was built before the street pavement but remains unconnected to the main sewer line of the zone. As a consequence, families still need to use old septic tanks, latrines and other methods. During the wet season, rain water represents a major threat for a small section of the community, affecting the houses located at the edge of a polluted creek (*Cañada Fenix*), a natural drainage route covered by grass, low vegetation and garbage all year around,

which runs through the southeast section of the neighborhood and overflows and floods that section of the barrio. The water also blocks some streets and pedestrians paths.



Illustration 6: Infrastructure works supervised by community leader.



Illustration 7: Sport court in barrio Miraflores occasionally used for community meetings.

The city garbage-removal system serves the area. 95% of the people utilize the service, while the other 5% burn their garbage or discard it in public places or empty lots. The neighborhood also has domestic gas service. In spite of the fact that the electric service is efficient and with 100% coverage, the community emphasizes the lack of maintenance for the street lighting system (IFAD 2002).

According to information provided by some residents and the Municipal Department of Social Development, in general, the community highlighted as their most significant needs the construction of educational facilities, a health center, and more sport facilities. The community identified examples of solutions such as the use of mobile clinics or a community-based clinic, designed to assist under-served communities, and the organization of better and more efficient public transportation and police enforcement. In regard to physical improvement works, the expectations of the

community include the completion of the infrastructure works (potable water, sewer and domestic gas), the completion of the street pavement and sidewalks and the cleaning of vacant land, mainly used by local residents as landfill.

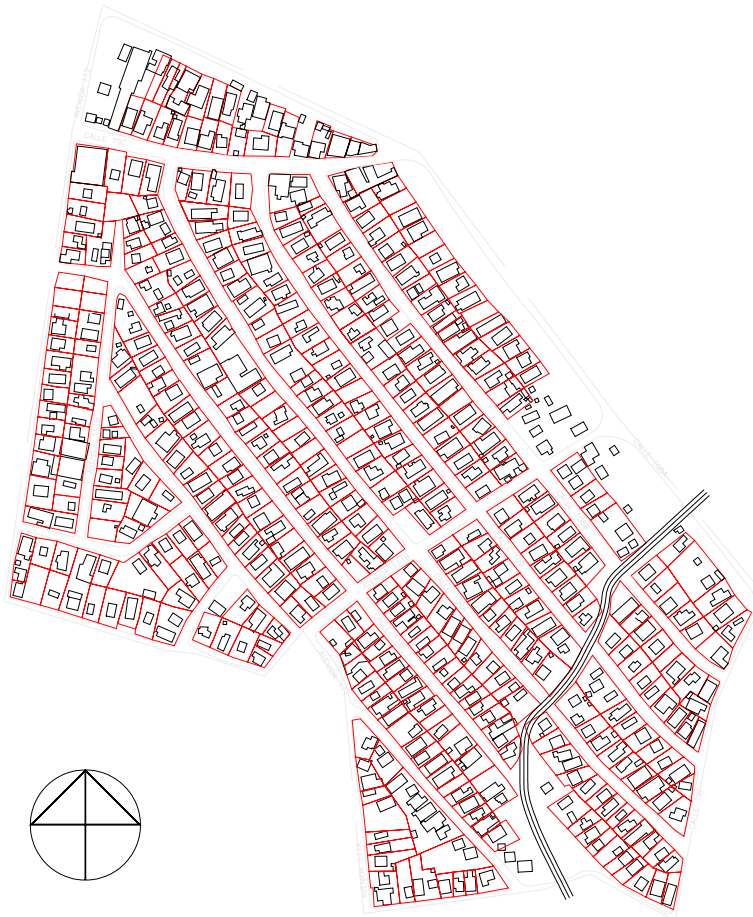


Illustration 8: Layout of Barrio Miraflores.

In regards to community organization, a neighborhood association exists and operates from people's own houses. The organization is solid in its legal status but exhibits low levels of organizational capacity and accountability, a characteristic that is directly related to the minimum participation of other residents of the barrio. Community members have expressed that the absence of a community center or a similar kind of

facility, constant political confrontation, and people's general lack of interest have contributed to this perception.

Barrio Rómulo Gallegos

This barrio is almost six decades old. It is located in the Coquivacoa Parish in the northern periphery of the city and housed a population of 2,283 inhabitants in a total of 396 dwellings in 2002. It occupies an extension of 11.7 hectares (27.2 acres) and has a population density of 195 persons/ha (89 persons/acre). The mean number of members per household is 5.7 and it mostly represents families from other sectors of Maracaibo with a long history in the area. There is only a minimum presence of migrant families from outside the city. In regard to the urban fabric, it is regular in dimension and proportion and it shows a dense grain. In general, lots are privately owned because residents have received legal titles from either the Municipality or the State of Zulia. When the research started, dwellers that still occupied land illegally were in the process of negotiating legalization while all dwellers in this condition were informed about process toward legal recognition.

This neighborhood also developed from irregular land occupation—invasion—and has consolidated over time. The predominant land use is residential, while the commercial activity is found in small proportion and dispersed, operating mainly within the dwelling. A school located in the neighboring barrio also absorbs the demand of this community. Adults and children usually gather or play on the streets because there are no recreational, sport or meeting facilities or public green spaces in the proximity to cover these needs.

The majority of the dwellings have been built on unstable soil and in a small depression in an area that floods when it rains—not-suitable for development. The risk of flooding increased with the construction of a nearby highway in the 1970s, which

obstructed the natural drainage. Residents pointed to major rainwater drainage that runs through the western section of the community, on top of which a wide street was built without taking into consideration the consequences for the barrio. Adding to the occasional environmental risks, structural damages in many dwellings are visible, a condition that affects a considerable high number of families. Residents have indicated that the problem has made them rebuild their dwellings on more than one occasion. Solutions that residents implemented included lifting up the roofing, filling the lot with earth, building on top of existing structures or substituting the totality of the dwelling, or part of it, after its collapse.



Illustration 9: Street pavement built in 2003 in barrio Rómulo Gallegos.



Illustration 10: House affected by land filling.

The city garbage-removal system serves the area, which is also served by domestic gas service. The neighborhood has access to public transportation, which runs at walking distance. The road infrastructure has failures, but neighbors consider it in adequate condition. Street pavement has followed the installation of the sewer system, but the work has accentuated people's worries and concerns about inefficient drainage

and floods that affect the area during the rainy season. Electric service is qualified as efficient with 100% coverage.

During my field research, a neighbor association was elected in 2003, operating out of people's homes. Members of the association pointed out the rivalry that existed between the previous and recent organization. Despite this mainly political confrontation, both groups agreed on the same issues and problems that affected their barrio and identified the infrastructure works that were needed to overcome such problems.



Illustration 11: Site of demolished house due to land subsidence.



Illustration 12: Land filling of empty lot.

A review of the information provided by some residents through informal conversation during community visits highlighted the most relevant issues that affected the majority of the families in the barrio. These requests included the solution of the environmental problems associated with the unstable condition of the soil and the inefficient natural drainages, the constant floods, the inadequate street pavement and sidewalks, the deficient water supply system, and the lack of police enforcement.

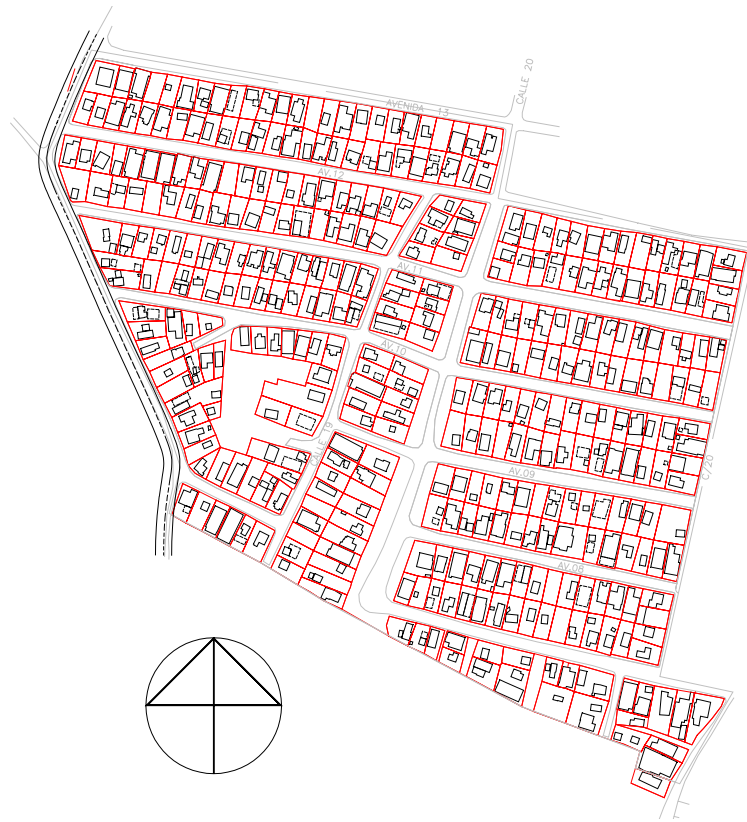


Illustration 13: Layout of Barrio Romulo Gallegos.

Barrio 23 de Marzo

This barrio, located to the north of Idelfonso Vásquez Parish in the north-western periphery of the city, was founded in 1989 following a process of private land invasion. The land on which dwellings have been built belonged to the Municipality of Maracaibo that has progressively granted land titles to residents. In 2002, it housed a population of 2,429 inhabitants and 528 housing units. The barrio occupies an area of 19.9 hectares (47 acres) and has a population density of 122 persons/ha (49 persons/acre). According to this number, the mean number of members per household is 4.7.

The community has a unique social-cultural dynamic, marked by the highest percentage of indigenous population in Maracaibo. With a significant presence of

Colombian immigrants who had illegally settled in the city, the area presents one of the highest indexes of poverty and a high crime rate. (IFAD 2002).

The predominant use is residential. The commercial uses are found in small proportion and dispersed, functioning mainly within the household. There are some evangelical churches, a public pre-school, and a public elementary school, which covers the demands of the community. Both educational buildings are in good condition. There are neither daycare facilities nor recreational areas in the neighborhood. At last, only a small health center (Mission Barrio Adentro) was built in 2003 to assist the local population and to promote the creation of a health committee (*comité de salud*).

In regards to people organizations, a neighborhood association existed in 2002, and is officially registered at the Municipality. The group does not possess an appropriate place to meet. In reality, although that is their impression, the group has access to a two-story high building built by the School of Architecture of Universidad del Zulia a few years ago, known as the Local Development Unit SALVY, that has been used to provide technical, constructive, and legal training and assistance to the community. The place is in the hands of the community but it has been neglected and has not assumed true ownership. Despite minimum use of this facility, a nearby school is frequently used to hold community meetings and other social activities. Moreover, when it is necessary, neighbors also gather in each other's homes.

The neighborhood has water service although it is deficient, as in many sectors of the city. The sewer system was successfully built, which allowed the community to eliminate domestic septic tanks, latrines and unhealthy methods. In addition, the barrio does not possess domestic gas service. 65% of the community uses the garbage pick-up service. The remaining 35%, as in other sectors of the city, burn their trash or dispose of

it in vacant land, public places, or natural ditches. The public lighting system is deficient and is in need of maintenance (IFAD 2002).



Illustration 14: Community meeting at a local school in barrio 23 de Marzo.



Illustration 15: Presence of indigenous population.

The street pavement was nonexistent in 2002 when fieldwork started and only a few streets had adequate sidewalks or curbs. Since streets lacked the basic infrastructure for pedestrians, they were forced to walk on the road and use irregular trails and paths through undeveloped lots. In the following two years, the Municipality invested in the construction of street pavement, sidewalks, curbs, street signals, and ditches to drain rainwater into the nearby *cañada*. The watercourse runs along the eastern boundary of the barrio and represents only a minor flooding threat since it was channeled but it remains as a source of pollution.

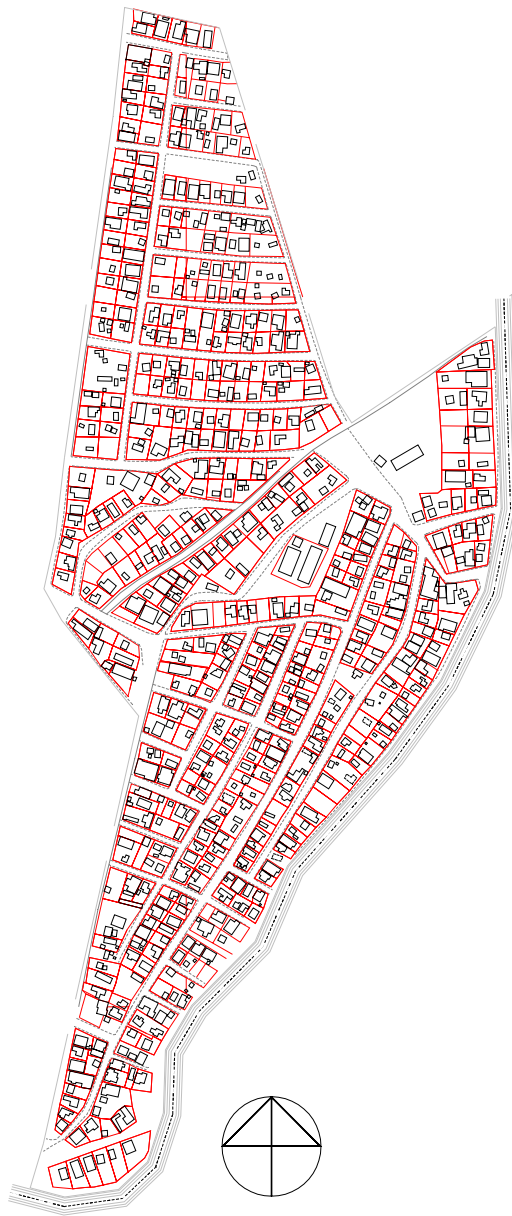


Illustration 18: Layout of Barrio 23 de Marzo.

A review of the information provided by some residents and the Municipal Department of Social Development pointed out that, in general, the community highlighted is in need of new schools, a church, sport facilities, improved public lighting

and garbage pick-up service, more street pavement, sidewalks, infrastructure to channel the polluted creek (*cañada*), installation of water, sewer and domestic gas infrastructure, modernization and rehabilitation of the health center, cleaning of vacant lots used as landfills, and police enforcement to minimize insecurity.



Illustration 16: Sidewalks built in 2004 in barrio 23 de Marzo.



Illustration 17: Street pavement built between 2005 and 2006.

Barrio Angelica de Lusinchi

This neighborhood is located in the southwestern periphery of the city, in Luis Hurtado Higuera Parish, and housed a population of 10,050 inhabitants and a total of 1861 housing units in 2002 when research began. The area is subdivided into three distinctive sectors (known as Sector I, Sector II and Sector III). This study focused on sector I where the program was initiated. Sector I accounts for 398 dwellings and a mean number of members per household at 5.4 (2150 inhabitants). It was first established in 1984 by the illegal occupation of public and private land and progressively expanded to occupy an extension of 20.1 hectares (44 acres). The population density of the sector

accounts for 107 persons/ha (44 persons/acre). The population is mainly composed of Venezuelans, Colombians and bi-national indigenous people.



Illustration 19: Community meeting at local church planning the implementation of the program.



Illustration 20: Dwelling in Barrio A. de Lusinchí showing some improvement. No solid sidewalk or fence is visible.

The neighborhood shows significant levels of material and social deterioration, a condition that motivated its inclusion in the program. From the three sectors that comprise the barrio, the newest sector III, founded in 1991, exhibits the most precarious living conditions. Most of the families here have depended on the informal sector and subsistence economy. In addition, the three sectors criticize the poor quality of the water provision system, the streets, and the absence of domestic gas. The sector managed to consolidate a minimum organizational base and constituted a neighborhood association in order to obtain the recognition of the local authorities, an event that materialized in 1997 with the incorporation of the barrio in the city cadastre and the municipal service provision plans. Even though the community organization has carried out efforts to integrate and encourage people's involvement and participation, the community shows low organizational capacity with low participation in community activities.

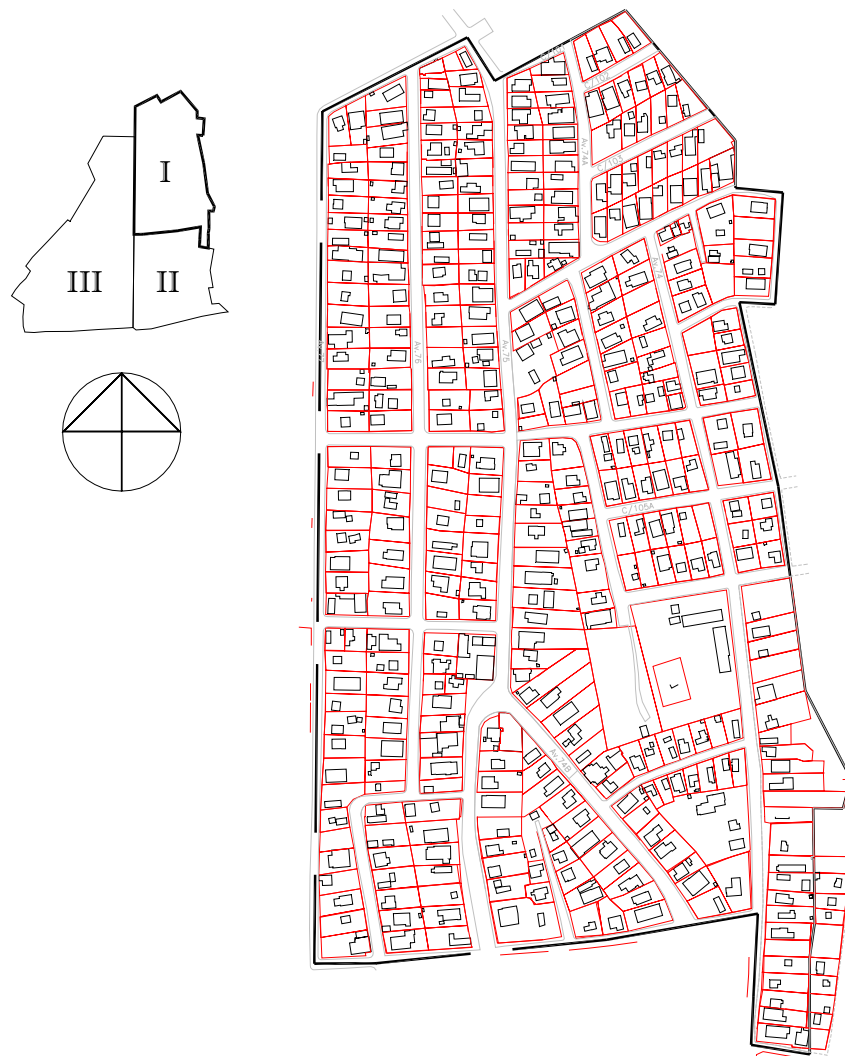


Illustration 21: Layout of Barrio Angelica de Lusinchi (Sector I).

Table 10: Case Studies. Comparative table.

		Barrio Miraflores	Barrio Romulo Gallegos	Barrio 23 de Marzo	Barrio Ang. de Lusinchi (I)
Location		Urban Periphery (North)	Urban Periphery (West)	Urban Periphery (North-west)	Urban Periphery (South-west)
Origin of settlement		Land invasion	Land invasion	Land invasion	Land invasion
Decade of foundation		1970s	1950s	1980s	1980s
Extension		23.1ha 56.8 acres	11.7 ha 27.2 acres	19.9ha 47 acres	20.1ha 49.7 acres
Population density		120 per/ha 49 per/acres	195 per/ha 89 per/acres	122 per/ha 49 per/acres	107 per/ha 44 per/acres
Members per household		6	5.7	4.7	5.4
Housing ownership		Mainly privately owned	Mainly privately owned	Mainly privately owned	Mainly privately owned
Quality of infrastructure (urban consolidation)	Roads	Paved with failures	Paved but inadequate	Paved and adequate	Paved but inadequate
	Water	Deficient service	Deficient service	Deficient service	Deficient service
	Sewer	Connected to sewer system	Built but unconnected to sewer system	Connected to sewer system	Connected to sewer system
	Electricity	Existent / both legal and illegal	Existent / both legal and illegal	Existent / both legal and illegal	Existent / both legal and illegal
	Gas	Covered	Covered	Nonexistent	Nonexistent
Quality of services (urban consolidation)	Public transp.	In walking distance	In walking distance	In walking distance	In walking distance
	Education	In adjacent barrio	In adjacent barrio	Existent	Existent
	Health	Nonexistent	Nonexistent	Small facility	Nonexistent
	Recreation	Basketball court	Nonexistent	Nonexistent	Nonexistent
	Community facility	Nonexistent	Nonexistent	Nonexistent	Nonexistent
Organizational form (from 2002 to 2006)		Neighborhood Association	Neighborhood Association	Neighborhood Association	Neighborhood Association
Environmental problems		Creek overflows / backyard burning	Unstable soil / Floods	Minor flooding threat	Flooding threat

The proposed action plan

Ciudadanía Plena's planning process offers a strategy to carry out a series of capacity building workshops based on an Action-Reflection-Action approach. The practice focuses on learning as both an active and reflective process. The strategy would allow partial outcomes that would progressively generate anticipated objectives.

The plan establishes that the strengthening of the community, as a group, should be promoted through a training strategy carried out in a community location. This learning experience focuses on the individual as the first level of interaction and response. The training is intended to guide participants in a route of reflection on psychological and social values while encouraging the significance of the household as a unit set by the individual and his and her immediate family. It is expected that such reflection eventually transcends the individual to a level that involves others in the search of a shared vision for their community of families. Likewise, the collective articulation and identification of social responsibilities reinforces recognition of civic rights and duties, a sense of ownership and local identity, all of which are necessary for development fulfillment. The professional work of facilitators from diverse disciplines—social work, psychology, architecture and construction, legal, financial and environmental—should contribute to guide this reflection and action.

The complex implementation process has been planned in the following way:

The local promotion strategy

A promotion phase starts with constant visits to the communities with the purpose of estimating the potential number of participants. With the contribution of local leaders and the economic advisors assigned to the barrio, beneficiaries are invited to a series of sessions where the program and the basic procedures and requirements to apply for financial aid are introduced. The number of attendees varies from more than 50 in the

introductory meeting to less than 20 in successive similar sessions. The facilitator needs to control this variation in number to minimize the training costs per person and be able to communicate effectively with the audience. This is achieved by organizing groups of no more than 25 people per session. In this way, the organization of groups and personalized attention leads to a strategy to set “solidarity groups” among participants.

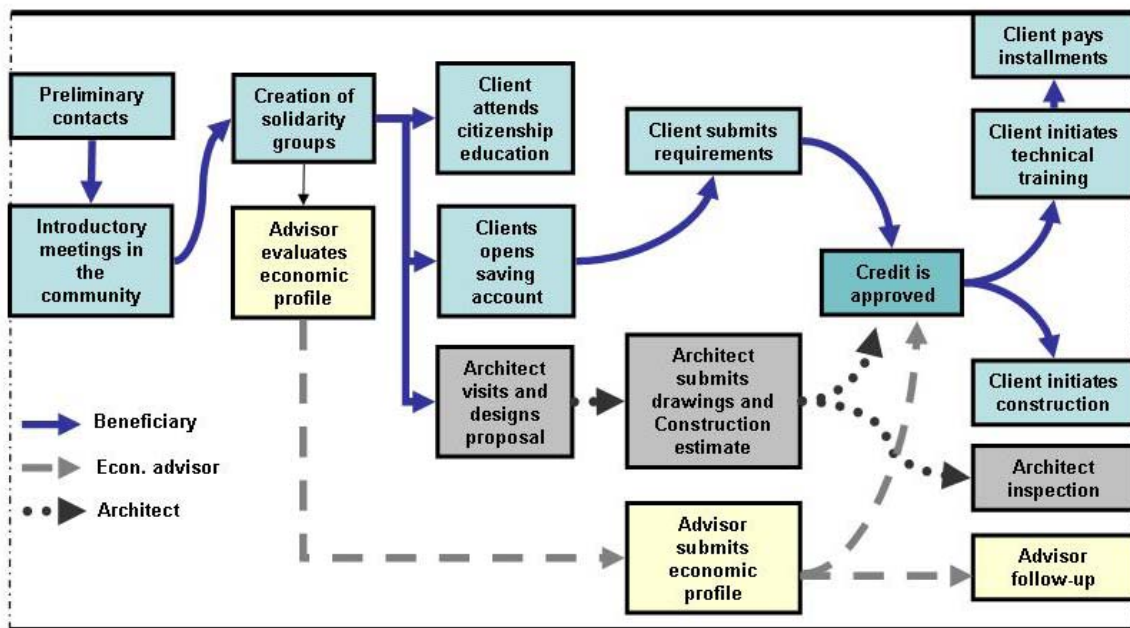


Figure 6: Sequence of activities of the program.

The solidarity lending group

Emerging housing microcredit/microfinance practice encompasses financial services that allow poor and low-income earning people to finance their housing needs with methods adapted from this experience. The finances are loans for relatively small amounts based on the client’s ability to repay. There are two broad categories of credit delivery in microcredit based on the way loans are delivered and guaranteed: individual and group-based. From these, group-based lending, also refers to “solidarity group

lending”, a strategy that involves lending to groups of people whose members guarantee each other’s loans. A solidarity group consists of 3 to 9 beneficiaries who voluntarily come together for mutual benefit and support. Beneficiaries are encouraged to organize their group sbased on long community relations and friendship but not familial bonds. Group members collectively guarantee each other’s loans and thus replace traditional collateral requirements (UN-HABITAT 2005).

Beneficiaries are invited to work together and share responsibilities during the learning and credit processes. Solidarity groups are organized with the assistance of program staff, but it is expected that they become self-managed groups that practicescollective leadership and decision-making in credit management. In these terms, groups can decide on loan size, discuss with the economic advisor about interest rates for members, repayment periods and rates. Because of the homogeneity of members, default risks are reduced. Membership is limited to people who live in the same community, who have comparable economic resources but who do not share family ties. Each group must select a chairperson who will be responsible for the group’s internal and external communications. Members are familiar with each other, allowing for a reliable source of information on potential loan diversion and defaults. Access to subsequent loans depends on successful repayment by all group members and can be increased depending on the ability of the borrower to take on larger amounts. Savings are usually required as a portion of the loan.

If one person fails to make a payment, the whole group will be affected since they will not qualify for subsequent credit. In this way, the sustainability of the program financing is ensured, taking care of the risks and control of the investment (Alcaldía of Maracaibo 2000).

The citizen education process

Ciudadanía Plena has structured the citizenship education process in two workshop modules or stages. The first module, which has been the responsibility of the Municipality, has been oriented toward the development and strengthening of a psychosocial dimension within the individuals and their groups. Every beneficiary who has successfully contributed to a solidarity group (or support group), must complete a number of training hours for this module as a prerequisite to receive individual credit. This rule makes the education cycle an important means to achieve any financial assistance. After participants have attended the first module, they receive a certificate of approval and a certificate of deposit in their recently-opened savings account for the total amount granted. Subsequently, in coordination with the execution of the individual projects, a second and more specific workshop module is carried out by the NGOs, which provides technical knowledge and orientation toward both housing improvement and micro-enterprising, respectively, according to the nature of the project.

The psychosocial module. The Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) Approach

Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) is a set of techniques, axioms and beliefs that adherents use primarily as an approach to personal development, and consequently, organizational development. It was developed in the early-to-mid 1970's at the University of Santa Cruz by John Grinder and Richard Bandler. Like many others, they had observed that people with similar education, training, background, and years of experience were achieving widely varying results. Bandler and Grinder were intrigued by these differences. They wanted to know how effective people perform and accomplish things and were especially interested in the possibility of being able to duplicate this behavior, and therefore the competence, of these highly effective individuals. They set

out to "model" human excellence in such fields as education, business, and therapy. What emerged from their work came to be called Neuro-Linguistic Programming.

NLP encompasses the three most influential components involved in producing human experience: neurology, language and programming. It is based on the idea that mind, body and language interact to create an individual's perception of the world and that their perceptions, and hence behaviors, can be changed by the application of a variety of techniques; in particular, "modeling", which involves the careful reproduction of the behaviors and beliefs of those who have achieved "excellence".

The neurological system regulates how our bodies function, language determines how we interface and communicate with other people and our programming determines the kinds of models of the world we create. Neuro-Linguistic Programming describes the fundamental dynamics between mind (*neuro*) and language (*linguistic*) and how their interplay affects the body and behavior (*programming*) (Dilts 2004).

Dilts adds how NLP addresses the many levels involved in being human and how it is a multi-dimensional process that involves the development of behavioral competence and flexibility, which also involves strategic thinking and an understanding of the mental and cognitive processes behind behavior. In this way, NLP provides tools and skills for the development of individual excellence, but it also establishes a system of empowering beliefs and presuppositions about what human beings are, what communication is, and what the process of change is all about.

NLP is about self-discovery, exploring identity and mission. It provides a framework for understanding and relating to the "spiritual" part of human experience that reaches beyond us as individuals to our family, community and global systems. By listening to and responding to the language patterns—choices of words—that best describe or respond to a problem or situation, the practitioner seeks to help or facilitate

detection of the indicators of self-limiting beliefs and restrictive thinking to recover information under the surface of the words. The personal transformation that is pursued seeks that group members reflect on their attitudes and change their thinking from “scarcity” to “abundance”, and become effective leaders in their own families and communities. Through each Neuro-linguistic programming process, each individual creates his or her own unique internal map of reality.

Kirby (1998) developed a series of positive assumptions about human beings and human behavior, which include:

1. No one is wrong or broke. People work perfectly when accomplishing what they currently visualize.
2. People already have all the resources they need.
3. Behind every behavior there is a positive intention.
4. Every behavior is useful in some context.
5. The meaning of communication is the response you get.
6. If you are not getting the response you want, do “something” different.
7. There is no such thing as failure. There is only feedback.
8. In any system, the element with the most flexibility exerts the most influence.
9. The map is not the territory.
10. If someone can do something, anyone can learn it. You cannot fail to communicate.

Over the years, Bandler and Grinder's work and their discoveries have attracted a variety of people. They helped expand the NLP model and organize it into a vast set of tools, skills, and information. As a result, there are NLP training centers throughout the world. In the process, Neuro-Linguistic Programming, a form that might be called

conventional or classical NLP, has made a contribution to personal and professional communication, growth, and change.

A close look at the Maracaibo experience shows that the learning-and-reflection experience of the first training module—citizenship education—offered to beneficiaries of the program, was conceived following the contribution of the principles associated to the Pyramid of Logical Levels of Change (Dilts 2000; Requena 2006) (Figure 7). In this way, the NLP model that was applied establishes the neurological levels, which guide the self-transformation of the individual and where change can occur. These levels follow, in a descending way, the environment, behavior, capacities, beliefs, identity and spiritual leanings. The basic level is the environment—external constraints. The person operates in this environment through his or her behavior, and this behavior is guided by his or her mental maps and strategies, which define capabilities. These capabilities are organized by belief systems and beliefs are organized by identity.

Before initiating a process of individual change, the facilitator or NLP practitioner should identify the level or levels in which to focus his or her effort with the group. The key of the model is that change that happens in a specific level always affects the logical levels that are located below in the pyramid but not the one above it. According to Requena (2006), for example, a change of beliefs affects the levels of capacities, behaviors and environment, but not the identity and the spiritual. A change in the spiritual level affects all the neurological levels.

Dilts also provides a practical example to assess the potential of this strategy:

So when a person is experiencing a difficulty, what you might want to know is whether this difficulty is coming from his external context, or is it that he does not have the specific sort of behavior required by that environment? Is the reason because he hasn't developed the appropriate strategy or map to generate that behavior? Is it because he lacks belief, or has a conflicting belief that interferes with his life or his outcome? Finally, is there some interference at the level of identity, of the whole system? (Dilts 1990 cited in Woodsmall, undated).

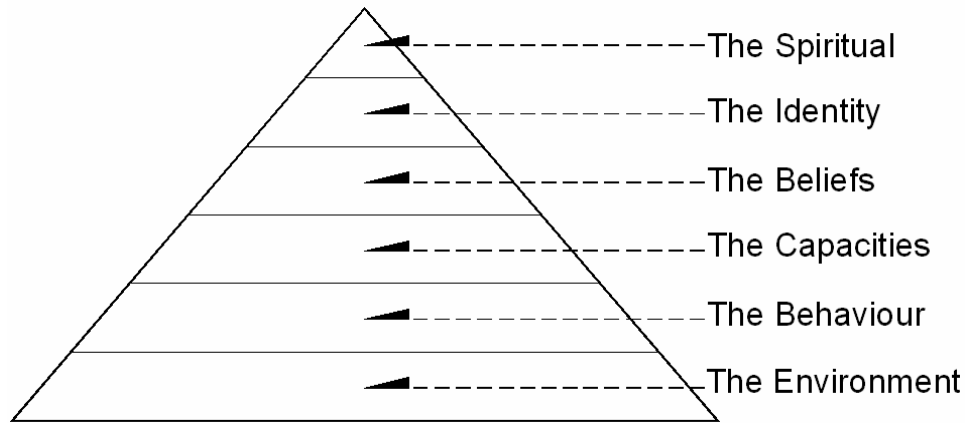


Figure 7: Logical Levels of Change.

Source: Interpretation from Dilts 2000.

The themes covered by the psychosocial module included, among others, the collective interpretation of values, such as local identity, self-esteem and joint effort. The program's workshops were planned to motivate participation in the group, to contribute to participatory community assessment, and to strengthen people's willingness to promote the creation of support groups oriented towards the fulfillment of individual projects. This last goal was a necessary requirement to obtain financial assistance. At the beginning of every workshop series, individual resistance to make the support groups was perceivable in all the cases.

The group dynamics and the self-evaluation of workshops helped the facilitator, the practitioner, to adjust the organization of themes and the way these should be introduced to participants. This process also helped set up a final sequence of workshops, structured in the following way:

Workshop 1: “Integration and purpose of life”. Attendees develop their definition of identity and their spaces of encounter in order to generate and promote an environment of self-confidence. Subsequently, people represent, in front of the audience, their purposes in life, which allows individuals to express positive yet realistic views of themselves and their situations. At the core of the workshop, it is expected that people develop their own maps of objectives.

Workshop 2: “We see what we want”. In this group activity, people reflect on their individual beliefs and, while externalizing their possible fears and barriers, they assume a positive personal strategy to change current attitudes, a step that will help improve their lives and those of the people that surround them.

Workshop 3: “Strengthening support groups”. Attendees have the opportunity to have a dialogue about citizenship values, such as mutual confidence and cooperation, and to reflect on the disadvantages of rivalry and dispute when they occur in their communities. The main goals are to build trust and to pursue the development of a community where everyone can be a winner.

Workshop 4: “Assessing my wealth”. Participants evaluate their material properties and belongings and are guided to externalize their fears about owing money, having debts and other financial responsibilities. The workshop focuses on the planning of household strategies as important tools to reduce household financial debts, and to administer the family income. In addition, people explore ways to expand their wealth and achieve economic independence. The strategy focuses on sharing experiences and advice.

Workshop 5: “Where is the flame of our community? Or which kind of flame do we want to promote?” With a practical application of a metaphor associated with light, a group of spiritual laws are applied to local examples that have been successful.

Participants bring all their knowledge and experience from the previous workshops and share them with the group. Finally, a ceremony where the future beneficiary symbolically receives his or her credit closes the psychosocial education cycle.

The key element in the learning process of a community group is the group dynamic. By its experiential character, it turns the learning experience into an emotional one. As stated by the experience in Accelerated Learning, the enjoyable character of the sessions "anchors" knowledge through emotions. In the group dynamic, emotions are revealed, the message is internalized, people's capacities and abilities are challenged, the sense of ownership is promoted, and positive stress is guided toward teamwork in a very effective playful character. The design of these dynamics, which transmit the knowledge of the project, the sense of ownership and the capacity to generate synergy in the participants, will depend on the facilitator's experience and sensibility towards issues affecting the group (Requena 2006).

The technical training module in housing improvement

As soon as participants complete the series of citizen education workshops, they receive a certificate of approval and a check for their amount of credit in a public ceremony, in the presence of the city mayor and representatives of the partner institutions. The event is promoted as an unusual opportunity for both the local authorities and the beneficiaries to meet and interact. Subsequently, and in coordination with the execution of individual projects, a second training module is planned and implemented by the local NGOs. In this stage, the construction and habitat module is carried out by the foundation HABITAT-LUZ, which has established the following sequence of workshops, based on practical knowledge of university professors:

Workshop 1: "Quality of life and the environment". The objectives of this first three-hour-long workshop are, first, to recognize the fundamental elements that condition

the quality of life in relation to dwellings and the urban context and second, to identify the valuable construction-based and environmental-oriented factors that can affect the improvement of the living conditions in a given community. An architect, whose expertise is centered on low-cost projects and environmental issues, has been designated as facilitator of this workshop.

Workshop 2: “Understanding the language of maps and the progressive construction of dwellings”. This group exercise helps the attendees recognize and acknowledge the dwelling as an element that can express the needs of all family members, and subsequently, identify construction guidelines in order to set up the phases of construction. Likewise, the workshop introduces basic comprehension tools to read and interpret basic dwelling design maps. This four-hour-long workshop is conducted by an architect with appropriate expertise in these topics.

Workshop 3: “Progressive dwelling production”. The architect, once again as facilitator of the four-hour-long workshop, helps attendees identify the most convenient building materials and their distinct possibilities of use for the progressive construction of their dwellings. At the same time, beneficiaries learn basic principles of budgeting, which help them to economize while investing their loans.

Workshop 4: “Basic principles of construction inspection”. The objectives of this last four-hour-long workshop are: to identify the possible phases that can be applied to the dwelling construction process and the strategies for their effective monitoring and supervision; and to determine the forms of participation in the process by the family and community.

Chapter 5: Findings. Representation and characterization of the community and people's responses.

If the development program is going to have an impact on communities, it is important to include people's opinions, expectations and critical points of views in order to retrofit the planning process towards the implementation of alternative solutions to the identified issues. In order to fulfill this goal, the incorporation of people should be assumed as a strategy in the management and coordination of activities, the registration and diffusion of information, as well as in evaluation. However, incentives alone are not sufficient to ensure poor people's participation. Appropriate institutional arrangements are also required. When designing and implementing a poverty-focused initiative such as Ciudadanía Plena, project managers have found it necessary to learn about the characteristics of poor communities that are assisted, as well as to look at poverty at the level of both the individual and household.

Building awareness of development projects—*concretization* or consciousness building—in several of the social actors can provide a critical and proactive position from which to face the physical and social dimensions of poverty in a community. At the same time, the physical improvement of houses may be achieved, a transformation in the neighborhood's space can become clear—enhancing values, building trust, confidence, and local support for projects. It is in this way that the understanding of the significance of participation at the local level and the opportunities that are offered to the distinct stakeholders, the analysis of the participatory processes, and the enhancement of beneficiaries' values and attitudes through the promotion of citizenship provide the necessary input to evaluate these assumptions.

This chapter reviews the quantitative and qualitative results of the monitoring of the program “Promotion of Full Citizenship”, in which participants—both development agents and beneficiaries—have been given the opportunity to evaluate the program’s philosophy, local goals and effects, as well as to provide input in these, the training process, and the credit system. In the context of the Venezuelan experience, where poverty-reduction initiatives have been planned and implemented, the agents of development have found it necessary to learn about the characteristics of the community, to understand poverty, and to value the nature of the interpretation offered by those who live in such a condition. It means that the point of view of the individual and the household or the family and the relationships and events that occur in the community as a whole, set the bases for the improvement and sustainability of the development project, the fulfillment of psychosocial and economic expectations, the enhancement of the development agent’s skills and his or her social consciousness, and the organizational relationship of the partner institutions.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BENEFICIARIES

The asserted interest of the organization in submitting the proposal to the financing institution (FIDES) led the partner institutions to initiate a gathering of social-economic data on the characteristics of the beneficiaries and their dwellings (materials, physical conditions, risk of natural hazards, etc.) or small enterprises. The information provided the necessary input to prepare the documentation required by FIDES, in Caracas, which was crucial to receive funds for the operation. As a starting point, community leaders from each of the barrios were contacted and properly informed about the scope of program and its goals, after which they were willing to provide useful support in the promotion and coordination of the surveying and collecting of the statistical information, an event that took place first during October and November of

2002, and has not stopped, because new communities and beneficiaries have been progressively added. The initial data gathering process was carried out with the assistance of a small group of interviewers who were properly trained and paid by the program.

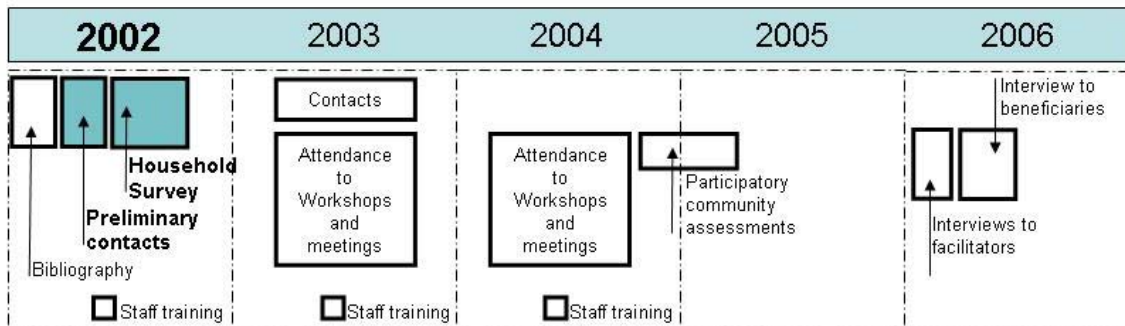


Figure 8: Research Activities Timeline. Preliminary contacts and Household survey.

The interviewers explained to each household the scope and objectives of the survey and subsequently distributed an eight-page questionnaire with the approval of the head of household (see appendix B for a sample questionnaire in Spanish language). Though the unit of analysis was the household, interviews were typically conducted with only one member of the family. Although interviewing all members of the household would provide a more complete assessment of the household's participation in their communities, the effort involved would have exceeded time and resources. The data was then processed by four assistants at the School of Architecture's computer lab. At this point, only parts of the socio-economic information were used in the preparation of the initial five-hundred personalized housing and micro-enterprise investment projects.

The support of the community leaders during the surveying was usually linked to their identification with the objectives of the program, and not with the political benefits that could be obtained in terms of social and political recognition by their immediate supporters, their neighbors. Moreover, in a highly politicized society, any possible

identification with the political opposition could lead to the leader's failure to achieve benefits for the community if it meant necessary negotiation with the ruling political group. This, in fact, would have been detrimental to his or her image and would have made him or her less accountable to the group of beneficiaries.

The person responsible for the household, the head of the family or his or her partner, was selected as the member best situated to discuss and provide accurate information. In any case, only those with the capacity to apply for financial assistance from the program were interested in participating in the survey. Those excluded or not informed on time were not part of the survey in the first phase. However, since the *Ciudadanía Plena* used an inclusive approach, other applicants had been included and later financed since the first group was attended. In any case, the person interviewed was the one for the household who would be granted a loan and responsible for its return. In the majority of the cases, the person interviewed was female, which indicated the importance of the role of women in low-income families and communities.

The method of selection for the study did not seek to generalize its findings to a broader population represented by all social sectors of civil society but rather to contribute to the understanding of low-income groups' attitudes and an understanding of citizenship values in regard to community development and social life. In this sense, the 2002 survey provided me with extensive information regarding household structure, employment conditions, family assets, and more importantly, people's opinions in regard to community participation, their motivation to participate and community leadership.

For solicitants of home improvement loans, the survey gathered the socio-economic information of the household, the physical characteristics of the housing unit (materials, functionality, infrastructure, natural risk) and its expected growth. To complete the credit application, basic architectural layouts were drawn and an estimate of

the construction work was calculated for each applicant. These variables were useful in characterizing people's housing needs and orienting design solutions in these areas (see examples of layouts in appendix D).

In the case of micro-enterprises, the information collected included the socio-economic data of the household, the nature of the business or commercial activity in operation, the destination of the investment and a cost-benefit evaluation. Due to the complexity of evaluating two distinct types of projects, the research only summarizes the responses of the initial group of 296 persons in barrios Miraflores, Angelica de Lusinchí, Rómulo Gallegos, and 23 de Marzo, who wished to apply for house improvement loans. These different aspects are explained next.

Household income

The majority of the economically active population in the four barrios accounted for individuals who worked in the informal sector of the economy (60.5% in Table 11). According to the data on employment condition (Figure 8), 16% were unemployed, and 5% had occasional jobs. 7% could not relate this question with their occupation at the time. Formal employment and independent occupations accounted for 72% of the population.

Table 11: Population by economic sector.

			Miraflores		Romulo Gallegos		23 de Marzo		Angélica de Lusinchi		Total	
Economic Sector												
Informal sector	82	59%	29	63%	42	57%	26	74%	179	60,5%		
Formal sector	41	29%	14	30%	24	32%	5	14%	84	28,4%		
Without information	18	12%	3	7%	8	11%	4	12%	33	11,1%		

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

The evaluation of household income showed that the most representative group was the one formed by families with household incomes between 380,000 Bs. (two minimum urban wages)³⁵ and 570,000 Bs. (three minimum urban wages in the same period), accounting for 35% of the sample, or 105 families (shown as Group C in Table 12). Likewise, group B, with household incomes between 190,000 Bs. (one minimum urban wage) and 380,000 Bs. (two minimum urban wages) accounted for 32% of the sample. It was concluded from this data that 67% of the families in these barrios belonged to both group B and group C. In addition, 20 families (7%) showed incomes below the minimum urban wage.

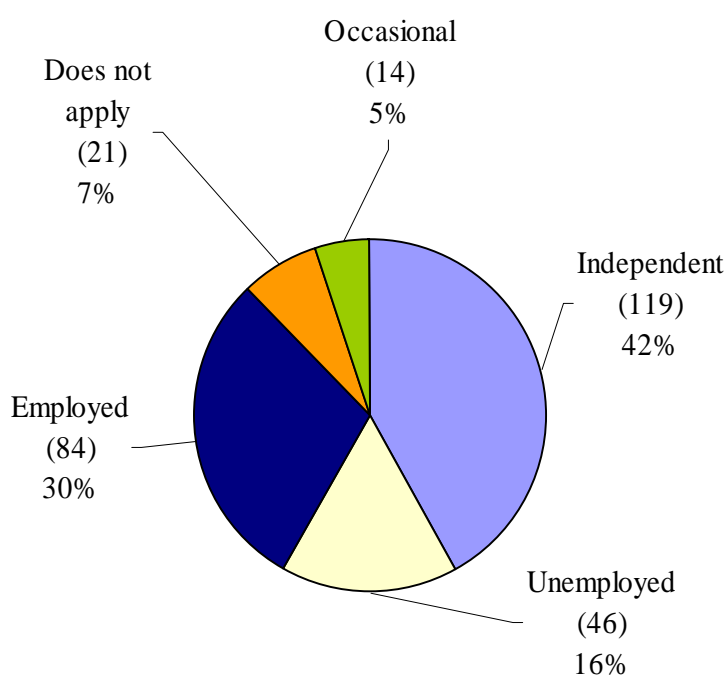


Figure 9: Employment condition.

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

³⁵ Minimum urban wage in 2002: Bs. 190,000 (140 US\$); in 2003: Bs. 209,088 (130 US\$); in 2004: Bs. 296.524,80 (154 US\$); in 2005: Bs. 405.000,00 (188 US\$); in 2006: Bs. 512.325,00 (238 US\$); in 2007: Bs. 614.790,00 (285 US\$); in 2008: BsF. 799,23 (372 US\$). (<http://www.mintra.gov.ve/paginas/salario/salario1.php>). Detailed government data can be found in the following link: <http://www.ine.gov.ve/condiciones/Costovida.htm>.

Table 12: Number of families by income group.

Total by income ranges	Group	Families by income range	%
Less than 190.000 Bs.	A	20	7%
More than 190.000/less than 380.000 Bs.	B	95	32%
More than 380.000/ less than 570.000 Bs.	C	105	35%
More than 570.000/ less than 760.000 Bs.	D	38	13%
More than 760.000/ less than 950.000 Bs.	E	20	7%
More than 950.000/ less than 1.140.000 Bs.	F	12	4%
More than 1.140.000/ less than 1.330.000 Bs.	G	3	1%
Without information	W.I.	3	1%
Total		296	100%

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

When the same data was compared with the indicators of poverty: cost of the Food Basket³⁶ (*Canasta alimentaria*) and cost of the Basic Needs Basket³⁷ (*canasta básica*), other outcomes arose. These indicators are assessed nationally every month and their variation and comparison with the urban wage reflects the impact of inflation in people's purchasing power. During the period of November-December 2002, the cost of the food basket was 505,680 Bs. (373 US\$) and the cost of the basic basket was 1,011,360 Bs (745 US\$). According to the results, 68.2% of families in the four barrios had incomes below 505,680 Bs. In theory, this group was not able to afford basic food products and was located below the line of extreme poverty. At the same time 97% of the same population, which included the former group, was located below the line of poverty. This group was not able to satisfy, in addition to food, other basic services specified as

³⁶ The food basket includes the essential products guaranteeing a minimum dietary intake, (appropriate consumption of calories, proteins and other nutrients). The cost of this basket constitutes the line of extreme poverty. Cost at Dec. 2002, Bs. 505.680 (373US\$)

³⁷ The basic basket includes other products and household items, such as education, health, electricity, clothing, transport services etc., plus the food basket. It is the result of multiplying by two (2) the cost of the food basket. Cost at Dec. 2002, Bs. 1.011.360 (745US\$)

part of the basic basket. In conclusion, only 3% of the group was not classified as poor, even though these families also suffered from the same urban deficiencies and a lack of services as the rest of the population of these barrios. As many residents pointed out, they also expressed their discontent in regard to their life conditions and the difficulties they confronted on a daily basis:

La vida es dura (life is difficult)

Housing and land tenure

As a prerequisite, applicants of the home improvement component were asked to submit a legal document³⁸ that could prove the ownership of the land on which their dwellings were built. It may sound abnormal, but a remarkable characteristic of illegally-settled neighborhoods that progressively consolidate over time is that the presence of a parallel and irregular land market develops, which allows individuals to commercialize land or dwellings separately as a consequence of minimal law enforcement and ineffective municipal cadastre in these areas. To the poor with no alternatives, the informal market provides enough security for them to invest in their housing, even though these claims are not recognized by housing finance institutions as collateral for loans (Mattingly 1993). It is possible that some informal markets have established confidence in their transactions, approaching those of formal markets.

The responses showed that a significant number of people (90%) affirmed that they owned their dwellings. However, when the same group was consulted about the status of ownership of their piece of land, the percentage of response was smaller (54%) (Figure 10). This inconsistency revealed the possibility that only a smaller number of households from this group could benefit because the submission of evidence proving

³⁸ An official land title, which is a credential of the legalization procedures, or an official address certificate (*nomenclatura*) issued by the Municipality are documents that can be used to confirm land ownership.

land ownership represented a fixed requirement. Families that were at risk of being excluded were asked to contact local and regional programs for land tenure legalization on public land to legalize their possessions.

Table 13: Land ownership by community.

	Miraflores		Rómulo Gallegos		23 de Marzo		Angélica de Lusinchi		Total	
Processing documents	40	28%	7	15%	33	45%			80	27,0%
Rented					1	1%			1	0,3%
Owned	82	58%	16	35%	34	46%	32	91%	164	55,4%
Illegal occupation	12	9%	16	35%	3	4%	2	6%	33	11,1%
Ejido	1	1%	6	13%					7	2,4%
Does not apply	2	1%							2	0,7%
No answer	4	3%	1	2%	3	4%	1	3%	9	3,0%

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

Table 14: Home ownership by community.

	Miraflores		Romulo Gallegos		23 de Marzo		Angélica de Lusinchi		Total	
Rented			1	2%					1	0,3%
Illegal occupation	3	2%			2	3%	2	6%	7	2,4%
Does not apply	1	1%	1	2%					2	0,7%
Owned	122	87%	43	94%	65	88%	32	91%	262	88,5%
Processing documents	12	9%			7	9%			19	6,4%
No answer	3	2%	1	2%			1	3%	5	1,7%

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

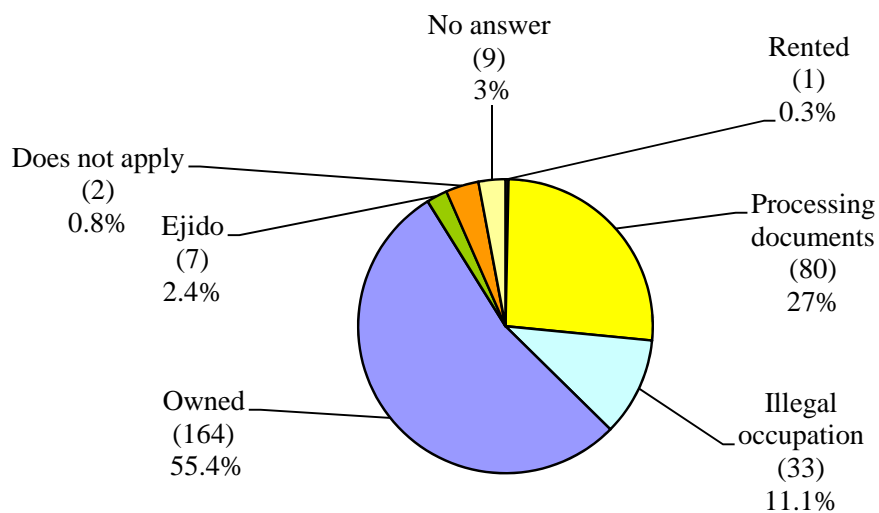


Figure 10: Land Ownership in the four barrios.

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

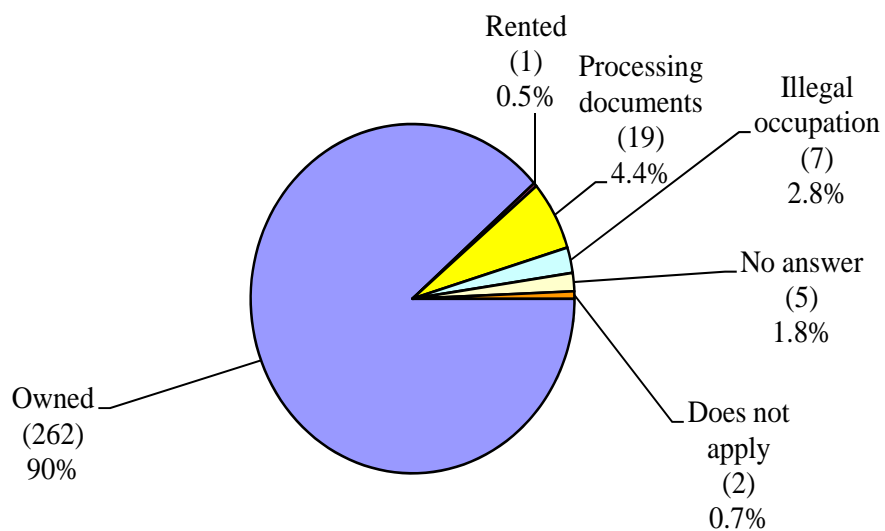


Figure 11: Home ownership in the four barrios.

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

Informal settlements and their housing were of physically diverse types. I found different levels of urban consolidation in regard to the infrastructure and the housing stock. Moreover, the process of housing improvement could reach a point where the settlements were hardly distinguishable from legal housing areas with reasonably good standards³⁹. This data was not analyzed in detail, despite the fact that it was collected. Nevertheless, it was possible to draw some conclusions from survey responses and site visits. In all barrios, the housing stock demonstrated different levels of consolidation, but some neighborhoods showed more considerable levels of precariousness in the housing stock than others.

Many cases were representative of a typical one-space shanty house that was built with disposal materials and no sanitary facilities. This condition usually left the inhabitants exposed to the elements and the insecurity that prevailed in their areas. Other units had been built with materials that are more resistant, replacing metal sheets, cardboard, and consolidating other spaces. Many externally finished dwellings had sanitary facilities, while others had evolved to display fences as a symbol of social status and to protect the property from trespassers. At last, the most important symbol of progress, represented by pre-fabricated concrete roofing, had been used to substitute deteriorated metal (zinc) panels.

The housing stock in barrio Miraflores showed the highest level of consolidation and a continuous process of growth, which pointed to a certain degree of improvement, in spite of their lack of some infrastructure services. Barrios Angelica de Lusinchi and 23 de Marzo observed low levels of consolidation and little investment. Barrio Romulo Gallegos, in spite of intents to consolidate the housing stock, had been continuously

³⁹ For further information on this topic see Roberts 1995.

affected by rain floods and unstable soils that had impeded or destroyed the few improvements that were carried out by the local people.

I concluded from the results of the 2002 survey and informal conversations with applicants that individuals who remained illegally settled in the barrios, without land titles or the proper recognition of their improvements by the municipal authorities, voluntarily remained secluded from the development program. This attitude was also present in other types of social programs that required some proof of land tenure. People recognized their illegality and acknowledged the restrictions imposed by National laws and local regulations⁴⁰. Moreover, in some cases, people tried to persuade development agents, knowing that this attempt would not produce any positive result or compromise.

Both municipal and regional governments had promoted the legalization of residents in the barrios by granting land titles at minimum or no cost or building a certain amount of new dwellings in the communities, mainly to substitute the most precarious units—the ranchos⁴¹. More than a solution to the condition of the poor, these processes were carried out in an effort to gain people's support in forthcoming regional elections⁴². Nevertheless, they provided an opportunity for some low-income residents to provide shelter to their families. Despite the political interest behind such approaches, the subsidized and paternalistic strategies gave some excluded individuals the status of resident or in any case a more dignified house. People were aware of this kind of political attitude and tried to take advantage of the situation. Once again, only a small number of households, the number of families that the political representative selected, benefited.

⁴⁰ The National Law that rules FIDES imposes restrictions when land tenure is not proven. Since SAMI receives resources from FIDES, it must follow the same control.

⁴¹ IVIMA (Municipal) and INZUVI (Regional) implement Rancho-Replacement Programs. The institutions did not provide official records.

⁴² Public elections of state governors and city mayors were held in October 2004. The 1999 Constitution allows rulers to run for re-election for another 4-year period.

The majority still lives under self-help and progressive construction schemes and remain excluded from the formal housing market.

Nevertheless, I also affirm that the major issue about informal settlements is that they catered to diverse housing and settlement needs⁴³. Even though my intention was not to do an extensive analysis of low-income housing, the data associated with dwelling indicated that the housing conditions in the four barrios were representative of the local poor neighborhoods in Maracaibo. Generally, squatters build their own housing, usually lack adequate supplies of water, electricity and/or sewer, and constantly demand the national and local governments to provide for them after consolidation of the housing stock has advanced.

The evaluation of a sample group of dwellings that physically improved with investment of program money and the technical assistance that was offered (a total of 150 cases that were financed during the second phase of implementation⁴⁴) concluded that the number of construction improvements (fences, repair or substitution of roofing, wall or floor finishing, etc.) was more than the number of functional improvements (addition of new areas such as a bathroom, bedroom, kitchen or other essential space). The original demand for both types of improvement projects was almost equivalent (with only 2% difference). Nevertheless, the percentage of cases that accomplished functional improvements decreased 22% from what was initially planned during the participatory design stage (from 49% to 27%). Likewise, the number of construction improvements was higher than initially projected (from 51% to 64%), mainly due to adjustments by the beneficiaries after the visit of the architect and the approval of credit.

This trend demonstrates people's preference to repair their existing dwellings prior to adding new rooms, even though these were needed. This was done in an effort to

⁴³ This issue has been pointed out by other authors: Roberts 1995, Echeverria 1995, Boueiri et al 1997.

⁴⁴ Rincon and Tsoi 2007.

improve the interior and/or the exterior quality of the different spaces in use at that moment or to build or repair the exterior fence in order to protect the property or symbolize the families' social status. In all cases, the socio-economic assessment done by the program's local economic advisor concluded that people spent the proper amount of money without putting household spending at risk. However, this kind of arrangement did not necessarily guarantee the full completion of the home improvement project, which confirmed that additional loans were essential for the progressive improvement of the dwelling (Rincon and Tsoi 2007).

Both types of improvement solutions pointed to sustainable construction criteria. The technical assistance—site inspections, design, and training—provided the basic knowledge to help people make appropriate decisions in regard to the construction of sanitary facilities when inexistent, fences for household protection, the preservation of vegetation and new tree planting for solar protection and energy-savings or proper ventilation of spaces. Despite the support, 9% of their sample group did not make proper use of the financial assistance and did not materialize any improvement for distinct reasons. The authors also assessed the comfort-habitability index⁴⁵ and found out that the program was able to impact this positively, by allowing the repair of previously uninhabitable spaces or adding new ones according to people's own demands. However, this impact was neither considerable nor significant, as the number of dwellings that was initially below the index (38%) was still high afterward (34%). The researchers recommended that greater emphasis be placed on single-space dwellings in their initial construction—the ranchos—than those with overlapping functions and large families.

⁴⁵ Minimum amount of square meters that a dwelling should have in relation to the number of members of household (household number/square meter), to provide them with a proper and comfortable area where to live and carry out family duties and activities: 3-4 persons (14m²/person); 5-7 persons (13m²/person); 8-10 (12 m²/persons).

Reasons that contributed to houses remaining below the comfort-habitability index included the incompleteness of the improvement work, the completion of constructive instead of functional improvements, the utilization of the credit for purposes other than the one mutually agreed upon with the program's architect, and the need of subsequent credits to consolidate the spaces already initiated. When the program had to delay the allocation of credits, many beneficiaries started their construction works by investing their own resources and savings. Such voluntary initiative allowed them to finish the project or invest in other types of improvements or endeavors since the money was already available.

The following images (Illustration 22-27) should help the reader recognize some of the major issues and concerns of the barrio residents and get a clearer picture of the alternative building solutions to their housing needs. The examples are real cases assisted by Ciudadanía Plena and the pictures were taken before any improvement was done. The initial shack (*rancho*) is built from junk material (Illustration 22). The resulting single-space unit is not equipped with sanitary facilities, resistant materials or external fences for security. The Dwellers are unprotected. Subsequently, materials that are more resistant are substituted, such as metal sheets for cardboard, while, usually, a new space is added to the existing shack (Illustration 23). The local electricity provider regularizes the service. Residents initiate the improvement of their housing units by adding other spaces progressively (Illustration 24). The dwelling is externally finished and sanitary facilities are built, usually outside the house. At that stage, the dwelling can remain unprotected (Illustration 25). With time, the Municipality builds the sewer and water systems, the street pavement and the sidewalks. Most dwellings, and the barrio as a whole, are now in the visible stage of improvement. Residences progressively build fences and exterior walls to safeguard the property (Illustration 26).



Illustration 22: Initial shack (rancho).



Illustration 23: Addition of new spaces.



Illustration 24: A dwelling is repaired.



Illustration 25: Some external finishing.



Illustration 26: The municipality builds infrastructure and services.



Illustration 27: Fences and exterior walls.

Residents build these fences in an effort to replace unstable and unsecure material such as wood panels or zinc plates, but also to reduce their risk of being assaulted. These walls also become a symbol of economic status in the community. At the same time, other dwellings show how concrete roofing replaces metal roofing; and new spaces, such as an inside bathroom, a small store, a workshop, a bedroom or a porch are built as well to repair the unit to cover household needs and expectations (Illustration 27).

People's attitude towards natural hazards and environmental risks

As commonly observed in poor communities, there are multiple factors that can affect the physical vulnerability of dwellings and the health condition of the members of the household. When it rains, irregular settlements, the majority of which are the result of inappropriate urban planning processes, can usually be flooded, mainly because their inhabitants tend to settle on unsuitable topography or soils without proper drainage. In many cases, sections of a barrio are built on flood plains, in proximity to watercourses (*cañadas*), highways, landfills, or lie on unstable soil. All of these conditions are incompatible with residential uses.

The fact that natural hazards can threaten some dwellings was an issue that motivated the program managers to make an adjustment in the credit policy. The problem, continuously mentioned by the HABITAT-LUZ Foundation since the beginning of the implementation phase, persisted since the first moment the program selected the first twelve communities, when the consideration of natural risks, as a condition that affected the quality of life of a community, was set aside.

No question in the 2002 socio-economic survey evaluated the people's opinion concerning their perception and attitude toward possible environmental risks that affected their communities as a consequence of the irregular construction of dwellings.

Accordingly, with the second survey conducted a year after, a restructured questionnaire was distributed to the same beneficiaries in order to update specific economic indicators, and include the perception of the possible environmental risks affecting them, among other topics. Consequently, two new questions assessed the risk condition of each dwelling as a prior condition to initiate the architectural design and to evaluate the credit application afterward.

The first question evaluated the person's opinion regarding his or her own safety to find out if the person was capable of visualizing whether or not their housing unit as well as their family were at risk. A second question interpreted the person's point of view about the cause of his or her risk condition by infrastructure present in their communities such as high-voltage transmission lines, waterways, etc.

The program modified the criteria for evaluation and decision-making taking into account these new assumptions, mainly applied to assess the applications for home improvement credits. The Administrative Committee considered that if these projects were approved and financed, the repair of a dwelling at environmental risk would afterward affect people's safety and their economic investments, a condition that would have an effect on the municipality's legal responsibility and the professionals who had approved these loans. A consequence like this could also affect the political image of the program and the mayor.

Three out of the four communities accounted for neighborhoods in which I observed repaired dwellings that had been built in the proximity of polluted watercourses (*cañadas*). From these four, Rómulo Gallegos was the barrio that showed major environmental threats, as most of the dwellings here had been built on filled land with deficient drainage. Many lots flooded every time it rained. Historically, this community developed in a depressed elevation zone and it became more isolated with the

construction of a highway on the higher elevation to the north of the area. This construction obstructed the natural drainage originating from the neighborhood. Consequently, the community captures high quantities of rainwater, which seriously floods the area, affecting a large number of families. In an attempt to solve the environmental problem, neighbors have filled their plots and the interior of their dwellings and have been forced to raise roof levels and walls, or to rebuild the dwelling, partially or totally, after its collapse. The construction of street pavement and sidewalks on part of municipality, without taking into account the location and elevation of houses, has also increased the risk of flooding and the presence of stagnant water.

Table 15: Identification of risk conditions in the community.

	Miraflores	Romulo Gallegos	23 de Marzo	Angélica de Lusinchi	Total
By natural hazards					
Yes	26 18,4%	7 15,2%	2 2,7%	0 0,0	35 11,8%
No	110 78%	39 84,8%	70 94,6%	34 97,1%	253 85,5%
No answer	5 3,5%		2 2,7%	1 2,9%	8 2,7%
By built elements					
Yes	5 3,5%				5 1,7%
No	131 92,9%	45 97,8%	71 95,9%	34 97,1%	281 94,9%
No answer	5 3,5%	1 2,2%	3 4,1%	1 2,9%	10 3,4%

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

Question 80. Is your dwelling put at risk by natural hazards? If affirmative, can you specify what kind of risk?

Question 81. Is your dwelling put at risk by built elements? If affirmative, can you specify what kind of risk?

Program facilitators and local promoters were not sufficiently qualified to detect the physical or construction damages to define the risk zones. Due to the importance of this issues and the proper coordination of their solutions, the HABITAT-LUZ foundation

organized visits to the area in order to evaluate the situation, with the cooperation of experts from other municipal departments. Such visits were scheduled and performed, and the experts confirmed structural damages to dwellings and their possible causes (constructions located on unstable soil, filled land, riverbeds or flood plains, bad construction quality, lack of maintenance, etc.). The program used these evaluations to validate each design proposal. Such comments also offered an opportunity to advise beneficiaries in the way they could address their construction problems. Beyond the scope of the program and the implementation limitations—based on household credit only—the program did not have the financial capacity to invest in other types of community projects, infrastructure or services- nor was it able to coordinate with other municipal agents for solutions⁴⁶.

Beneficiaries' responses regarding the environmental risk conditions of their dwellings confirmed that low-income people perceived this problem in a different way. A number of initial applicants, who completed citizenship education and whose projects were financed by January 2004, contributed their opinion on this issue. The interpretation of results from the survey demonstrated that a very limited number of people recognized any potential environmental hazards while in fact their dwellings showed some physical damages associated with the alteration of soil and water courses, filled land and land subsidence, or unsafe materials (according to the technical assessment). This conclusion was validated in each site visit. Barrio Romulo Gallegos accounted for the most critical examples. Here, 100% of the applicants (18 households at that moment) lived under high environmental risk. This same group was unaware of their condition. Individuals were only concerned with preserving the physical stability of their dwellings. Beyond the

⁴⁶ Local municipal departments work in the solution of community problems with minimum coordination among them. The number of barrios and the financial limitations does not allow to concentrate the efforts in the consolidation of a determined group of barrios.

solution of a personal problem, the interest to look after the environment in a collective way or to associate it with the community's quality of life was not present. Consequently, the implementation of the program had to be postponed until further technical and political decisions were made.

The majority of the inhabitants of barrio Romulo Gallegos needed to replace deteriorated materials on their dwellings or to stabilize them after floods or the subsidence of soil had affected them. These solicitants were always the most affected by technical decisions which caused their applications to be rejected based on safety issues. The major criticism of this adjustment to the evaluation and decision criteria was that the program unnecessarily raised expectations and later discontinued the community work, although temporarily. In this way, and in spite of being able to participate in the citizenship education process, applicants could not benefit from the dwelling improvement program, which denied their access to financial alternatives to improve their quality of life, and, indeed, to government money, which they, as Venezuelan citizens, deserved.

In any case, after people confirmed their willingness to participate, in every case visited, both the architect and the beneficiary evaluated, validated and certified any condition of risk and agreed on the improvement projects. Solutions were not imposed on them but some neighbors assumed a slightly aggressive attitude when they became aware of their limitations. Any strategy was valid to persuade and to convince the program's staff to approve the financial aid or to grant a higher amount than the calculated and then delay the payments to the State. Facing a possibility of disapproval, some residents sought economic contribution from the mayor without success. As a result, beyond the mere altruism that motivated the work team, the group reflected on the commitment that the municipal government should assume while addressing any intervention in the

barrios. The best conclusion of the work team in this regard stated that irregular settlements that had grown spontaneously and without municipal control and supervision should be managed as other consolidated and planned sections of the city to combat the consequences of unplanned urban growth on the environment.

Even though it was not innovative to affirm that local development programs had to be carried out in a comprehensive way, and no matter how much Ciudadanía Plena desired to improve the housing stock, the dwelling was, by definition, an integral part of the urban physical fabric, formed by streets, public spaces and natural features. If the municipality does not solve problems in a comprehensive way, following a planned study and implementation logic, certain problems will remain unsolved.

Because of the interruption of the program in the barrios during 2002 and 2003, the communities felt manipulated and deceived by the government agents. Moreover, in subsequent meetings, neighbors pointed out three important observations; first, that their expectations were not fulfilled in the program; second, that they needed to find immediate solutions to their housing problems and third, that while the Municipality had an obligation, it lacked commitment to the communities. More still, neighbors reaffirmed the importance of the program and demanded its continuance because of the benefits it could bring to their barrios. The Municipality, represented by SAMI, took into consideration these observations and agreed not to withdraw from the barrios, but only to postpone the allocation of credits. Nevertheless, the program and the community agreed not to defer the training process with the expectation that the credits could materialize promptly. With this decision, the program avoided conflicts and kept the motivation of beneficiaries. The Municipality later proposed the completion of works of infrastructures (sewers, roads, or sidewalks) but these measures did not necessarily benefit the consolidation of the housing stock.

People's attitude towards community participation

Most of the surveyed population declared not to belong or to have belonged to any community group or neighbor association before 2002 (73.5%). Moreover, when those individuals who answered “did not apply” and “without information” alternatives were added (4%), the result showed that only 23.3% of the neighbors had participated in their local organizations or groups and could recognize which group that was. Nevertheless, a minimum number of individuals did not recognize the nature and scope of these community-based groups (Table 16).

Table 16: Participation in community groups by community.

	Miraflores		Romulo Gallegos		23 de Marzo		Angélica de Lusinchi		Total	
No	101	71%	32	70%	56	76%	27	77%	216	73,0%
Yes					2	3%			2	0,7%
Yes but does not recall the organization	4	3%			1	1%			5	1,7%
Yes and can specify	31	22%	11	24%	15	20%	7	20%	64	21,6%
Without information	5	4%	3	5%			1	3%	9	3,0%

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

Question 70. Have you or a member of your household been member of a neighbors group? Specify.

Neighbors pointed out the reasons why they had not participated in their communities. Table 17 indicates how almost half of the respondents in the four barrios (48%) argued that lack of time made their participation difficult. In addition to this lack of general motivation or interest to spend time and effort, 26% of the individuals did not want or were not able to respond to the question for unknown reasons. Perhaps their misinterpretation of issues or their lack of motivation induced this answer. Other reasons

were clearly pointed out as well. Some neighbors (6%) believed that, if they participated, they would get into trouble, while others (2%) believed that community-oriented activities were not important. A smaller group explicitly expressed that their non-participation was a result of personal discrepancies with their neighbor association or with one leader and their disagreement on the matter. Finally, a small percentage affirmed that they were not interested in paying any attention to community issues and getting involved (6%). These same individuals excused themselves, pointing to causes such as health problems, their status as illegal residents, or their advanced age.

More than half of the interviewees endorsed the necessary existence of other community organizations and leaders in their barrios in order to attend to their problems and demands more efficiently. They considered that their current representatives did not work towards the solution of such problems but tried to gain favors and obtain personal benefit. This conclusion confirms the hypothesis that there exists a generalized discontent with the type of leadership and the lack of communication strategies between community leaders and residents. Despite this perception, it was evident that residents were empathic and willing to attend meetings when they were invited to become part of the group. People also expressed some of the reasons that influenced this behavior, which included the lack of preparation concerning the subjects and issues they ought to address, their lower motivation and personal commitment, and the lack of time to contribute to collective projects. It was always more convenient for most of the people if “someone else” took care of the problems, especially because people are not financially rewarded for the time and money spent carrying out these unpaid duties.

Table 17: Reasons for not participating by community.

	Miraflores		Romulo Gallegos		23 de Marzo		Angélica de Lusinchi		Total	
He/she does not have enough time	41	55%	19	54%	60	43%	22	48%	142	48%
He/she is not interested	1	1%	1	3%	9	6%	6	13%	17	6%
He/she believes it will bring them problems	1	1%	2	6%	13	9%	2	4%	18	6%
Other (heath, foreigner, age, religion)					7	5%			7	2%
He/she thinks it is not important	1	1%	1	3%	2	1%	1	2%	5	2%
He/she does not agree with comm. Association							2	4%	2	1%
He/she does not know	1	1%							1	0%
Lack of information	1	1%							1	0%
No answer	21	28%	10	29%	33	23%	12	26%	76	26%
Does not apply	7	9%	2	6%	17	12%	1	2%	27	9%

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

Question 73. If negative [your participation in a neighbors group], why?

Table 18: Do you believe there should be other community organization?

	Miraflores		Romulo Gallegos		23 de Marzo		Angélica de Lusinchi		Total	
Yes	75	53,2%	25	54,3%	48	64,9%	19	54,3%	167	56,4%
No	49	34,8%	19	41,3%	23	31,1%	15	42,9%	106	35,8%
No answer	17	12,1%	2	4,3%	3	4,1%	1	2,9%	23	7,8%

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

Question 69. Is it necessary to have other type of organizations in the barrio?

Despite the success of the promotional campaign and the data collection in October and November of 2002, the implementation phase was delayed for seven months due to lack of funds. In June of 2003, a new set of meetings to promote the program was initiated after the financial resources were finally sent by FIDES in Caracas. These meetings served to introduce the program to a larger number of people than those initially contacted. Newcomers had felt themselves neglected in 2002 when they were not informed about the program and not surveyed on time. Once again, representatives of the partner institutions informed the beneficiaries about the reasons for delay and the forthcoming arrival of funding. They also made it clear that this hindrance was more a consequence of the bureaucracy of FIDES in Caracas than a situation set up by the local institutions.

Community leadership

Community leaders usually have the capacity to address a group and maintain its attention, but at the same time, they can utilize this capacity to manipulate them and impose their interests. In all the cases, it was clear that the program did not pay community leaders for their work, and their interests were not necessarily oriented toward economic benefit but more related to the opportunity to exercise power in their immediate jurisdiction. From their perspectives, in their condition as residents of the barrio, being the president or a member of a community association positions them in direct contact with the external sources of control—access to benefits, funding, etc. Their capacity to negotiate economic and social benefits and to bring them to their communities, in the form of local improvement projects, donations, or employment will influence the way the community perceives the achievements of the organizations and their leaders. Hence, involvement will make the leaders seem influential and essential

representatives of their communities, and this accomplishment will allow them to use their “necessary” leadership in their corresponding parishes.

Various community leaders stated that they “did not receive any support from the municipality”, but they validated the legitimacy of their position and the constant confrontation in the political arena. The pronounced political rivalry of the regional and municipal governors in power accentuated this situation. The leaders tended to negotiate with government at any level, as long as they were able to offer, and certainly provide, goods and services for them. This mechanism perpetuated the paternalism of the State not yet transformed by the paradigm of the new citizen. Ciudadanía Plena considered this transformation one of its main goals. In conversations with some leaders, they expressed some of the reasons why the neighbors had not participated in addressing community issues. I interpreted from their comments that the main stimulus that mobilized individuals was economic, because the lack of resources and the impossibility of satisfying their needs have obliged them to establish pragmatic goals on behalf of their immediate individual or household needs—food, shelter, or health.

Out of the total number of households surveyed (269 in the four barrios), 10 individuals (3%) recognized themselves as community leaders. Additionally, 9%, which accounted for 25 people, considered themselves as active members of their local groups, while 6%, accounting for 19 people, qualified themselves as passive members with minimum or no participation. At this point, the remaining 81%, which represented 237 households, did not exhibit any interest or voluntary motivation in accompanying their neighborhood representatives in their common causes, even if it meant achieving benefits for themselves.

The participation of community leaders in the four barrios was constant during the implementation phase, thanks to their prior motivation and education about the program’s

goals and expectations, and to the role they would play in motivating people's participation. Moreover, the program considered the leaders as beneficiaries as well. Their involvement facilitated the organization of meetings and public assemblies in their respective communities, and, at the same time, promotion within their groups. Community leaders were direct bridges between the beneficiaries and the program team. Nevertheless, they were able to encourage or discourage neighbors to participate in the program, presuming the existence of some local power or discrepancies with the local government's political ideology, which had a clear affiliation with President Chavez's administration.

Table 19: Participation in neighbor groups by community.

	Miraflores		Romulo Gallegos		23 de Marzo		Angélica de Lusinchi		Total	
Community leader	5	4%	2	4%	2	3%	1	3%	10	3,4%
Active membership	12	9%	5	11%	7	9%	1	3%	25	8,4%
Passive membership	11	8%	4	9%	3	4%	2	6%	20	6,8%
Attend meetings				0%	2	3%			2	0,7%
Without information	113	80%	35	76%	60	81%	29	82%	237	80,1%
Does not apply				0%			2	6%	2	0,7%

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

Question 72. If positive [your participation in a neighbors group], How has your participation been?

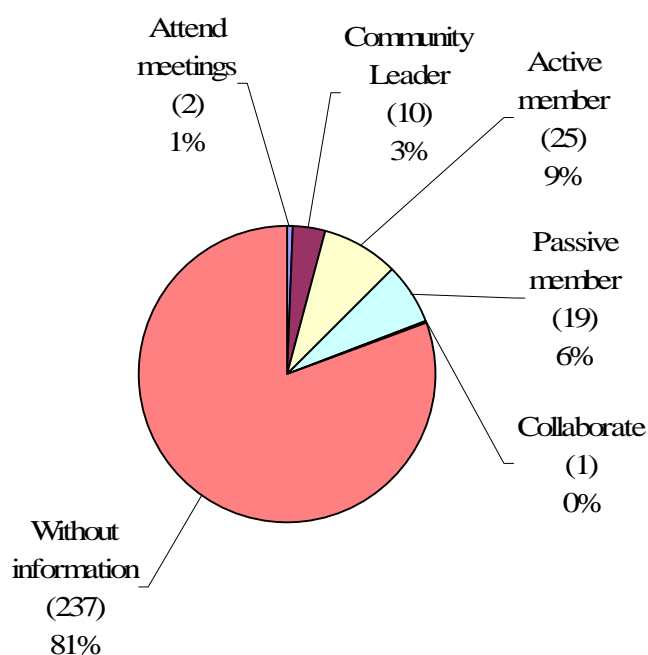


Figure 12: Participation in neighbor groups.

Source: 2002 Survey of beneficiaries

AFTER A YEAR OF DELAY, WHAT DID BENEFICIARIES EXPECT? RESPONSES OF THE COMMUNITY PRIOR TO THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE OF THE PROGRAM.

Given that the program was basically oriented to assist only a reduced number of poor communities, the process of interaction between the facilitators and the beneficiaries was carried out through informative meetings and consciousness building workshops in locations within each community or in close proximity to them. In each event, both parts followed a dialogic approach in which information was shared with openness, respect, and mutual recognition. The work of expert and experienced facilitators provided the framework to conclude with some individual and group reflections in each session. Every time, the objective was to introduce the philosophy of the program and to orient people's attention toward the psychological and social aspects of citizen education and the development of the community in order to motivate their involvement.

As a strategy, the presidents or other representatives of the neighbor associations were contacted and were asked to invite residents to attend the introductory sessions. But most of the time, it required more than one session to successfully inform a reasonable number of people in a community. With the exception of barrios Miraflores and Rómulo Gallegos, the assemblies were successful in their number of attendants and the positive motivation that was registered. The expectations generated when the survey was conducted, the year before, motivated their early attendance. This response suggested a prevailing necessity to obtain assistance to improve their dwellings and/or household income.

However, these assemblies were not always effective in their objectives. For example, the political conflicts in barrio Miraflores, in some way managed by the community leaders, had an influence in a large number of persons (more than 60% of the first applicants) who felt little interest in being part of the program.

I followed up on a series of meetings called in each one of the four communities during two periods. The first series was held between June and December of 2002, when a national strike in protest to President Chavez's Regime literally paralyzed the country. The second one was held between June of 2003, when meetings resumed, and April of 2004, when the initial group of participants successfully completed the first series of citizenship education workshops. At that moment, FIDES had finally approved and transferred the financial resources to the local administration. Since then, the program held meetings periodically in order to permanently inform, train and prepare new beneficiaries to receive credit.

The data collection strategy in these events consisted of my intervention as a passive observer in twenty-six community meetings and workshops, where I registered, in the form of text and images, the activities, comments and agreements of each session.

The data included information from direct beneficiaries as well as from the program facilitators. I address the results of this monitoring of meetings and workshops in each of the neighborhoods next. The following lines expose the individual and group perceptions prior to the implementation of the program's credit components.

The program first held introductory meetings in Barrio Miraflores from September to December of 2002.

... from barrio we want to become a community (President of community association of barrio Miraflores, local meeting, 09/28/2002).

In these terms, Margarita, President of Barrio Miraflores' community association, addressed a small audience that stood on a local street, crowded with youngsters playing and pedestrians passing by. The meeting had been called to discuss the new sewer system already under construction, but this dynamic woman took advantage of this opportunity to express her interest in improving the conditions of life for the barrio's inhabitants, of which, in fact, she was included. "With the new sewer, the community will improve... one must sacrifice during the works." In the same event, representatives of *Ciudadanía Plena* were also present to introduce the objectives of the program and promote subsequent visits to the community in order to approach the residents. At the end of the meeting, everybody signed the attendance book of the association, expressing their agreement and commitment.

After the national strike, the meetings resumed in April of 2003 to clarify the program's status and goals in the community, to keep beneficiaries informed about the unexpected delay during the implementation phase, and to get a sense of their opinions of the work of the partner institutions. Continuously, only general interest in the credit program was expressed, a condition that obliged the program's coordinators to reorient the structure and content of their introductory meetings to put more emphasis on the

importance of citizenship education and consciousness building, which had been the long term objectives of the program.

In general, meetings in Miraflores were held in inappropriate locations within the community. The usual location consisted of the street, someone's backyard, a mechanic's workshop or a basketball court, the latter usually noisily crowded with youngsters. In most cases, the group did not count on sound equipment or comfort to improve dialogue and encourage sharing opinions, which made the task of communicating ideas difficult when the number of attendees was high. Equally, in these locations, people usually remained standing and distracted, especially when the audience was again large. During these meetings, I was able to identify problems associated with the intervention in the community of groups that sought to become a new neighbor association. The confrontation between the two groups responded to conflicts between two politically opposing groups as well. In an informal conversation between leaders of the community and a representative of the HABITAT-LUZ foundation, they openly declared their empathy with the state's governor, clearly identifying with Chavez's opposition. Nevertheless, they did not oppose negotiation with the mayor who was openly pro-Chavez, or other political groups in Miraflores that were supporters and promoters of the political ideology of the national government, when it meant benefits for the neighborhood. In order to clarify the deliberate misunderstanding, the neighborhood association provided evidence of its legal status and registration in the municipality until 2005. The leaders' commitment to Miraflores was clear, and they did not rule out a willingness to negotiate with the mayor when it was a matter of achieving projects for the barrio.

In Barrio Romulo Gallegos, the program facilitators contacted and invited the leaders and residents to attend a first meeting in June of 2002 to inform about the

effective implementation of the program. This meeting was not well organized and the crowd was not large enough to account for an effective assembly. Most of the discussion with the president of the community organization was held on the street because the organization lacked a place to gather and conduct meetings properly. The president did not call together the group, arguing that he had to take care of “other issues” in the community. This episode illustrated the lack of leadership and the internal weakness of the organization. It required the program staff to approach residents who did not belong to the organization directly and on a house-by-house basis. It was recommended, at that moment, that leaders, as well as residents, be motivated personally to collaborate in the data collection and implementation of the forthcoming phases. As a strategy to motivate and strengthen the leaders’ capacities, the program agents invited them to participate in the management and decision-making as an attempt to stimulate their accountability and acceptance of development initiatives for their own community. As a consequence of their involvement, some positive feedback was recorded in a later meeting in July of 2003:

If this [project] means to work for the community, I am in. I had enjoyed working for the barrio.... but the communities should be educated as well (Leader of Rómulo Gallegos in a management meeting, 07/14/2003).

Likewise, community members came with their doubts. Assistants expressed criticisms and concerns over the credit, “but nothing else”, and proposed a subsequent meeting, in which the president of the community organization should be present. Their expectations had changed when the cost of supplies and building material had increased, as they recalled. However, it was in this way that consciousness building was initiated.

At the beginning, the program was not clearly explained. I attended the meeting for curiosity... I thought I missed an opportunity. We were motiveless (Neighbor’s opinion during an introductory meeting in Barrio Rómulo Gallegos, 03/31/2003).

People did not believe in the cost-benefit effect of the interest rates. Some people behaved aggressively and were reluctant to accept the legal conditions required by the program, which made the work of the team difficult. I noticed rivalry between the previous and recent community groups, although it was not so significant since both group leaders were present and were willing to exchange comments about the works in their community.

Similar data gathering and information dissemination strategies were applied in barrio 23 de Marzo during 2002 and 2003. However, a characteristic distinguished this community from the other three. People attended most of the meetings in high numbers, a trend that I associated with the intervention of some external factors. First, the community had traditionally benefited from other development programs carried out in the recent past (i.e. University-based projects, State-funded infrastructure programs, religious groups, etc.). Second, the local leader had demonstrated his capacity to assemble the group and communicate information. He addressed the audience in the following terms to express his satisfaction with the work of external agents in his barrio:

The person that works for the community is part of it... we are happy because we now see the streets and the sidewalks.... and then the pavement... it has happened in two years... this is not going to be a barrio but an *urbanización* [urbanized neighborhood]... we are a prestigious community (Community leader addressing the assembly in 23 de Marzo, 04/03/2003).

Third, and more importantly, residents of barrio 23 de Marzo were poorer than the inhabitants of the other three. This condition was expressed in the quality of their dwellings and the limitations that they voiced. This perception pointed to a condition that emphasized people's need to achieve immediate solutions of their household needs and local problems, which obliged them to monitor the alternatives that institutions from

distinct levels of government had offered them. These three conditions facilitated the entrance of the program in 23 de Marzo and the introductory meetings opened up the route towards implementation more rapidly.

Barrio Angelica de Lusinchi was the last community to be contacted by the program. The first local meetings, carried out in July of 2003, were held in two different schools run by religious groups, one in Sector I and another in Sector II. The local community association lacked an appropriate place to gather a large crowd. In these events, as in the other communities, the representatives of the institutions affiliated with the program introduced the general information of the development initiative, its requirements and the possible positive impacts that could be achieved. The facilitators presumed that, based on the local recognition of the 1999 pilot experience and the constructive expectations exposed by some residents in the two introductory meetings, the presentations would generate a positive response, general acceptance and enhance the credibility of Ciudadanía Plena in the eyes of other possible new beneficiaries. External factors also contributed. First, despite the one-year delay of the implementation phase, residents of Angelica de Lusinchi perceived the program as something tangible, supported by their previous experience. I observed how some attendees at the meeting were able to state that it represented the continuity of something successful in the past. Due to this attitude, I noticed that people expressed their openness and acceptance when the information about the program, including the credit requirements, was explained.

It seems that this is a different program, because it comes with *capacitación* [training]... (Neighbor, introductory meeting in barrio Angelica de Lusinchi, 07/07/2003)

First, I thought that I would not believe it until I saw it. He accomplished his goal [a neighbor], and based on his goal he set up a plan. (Neighbor of barrio Angelica de Lusinchi, 07/07/2003).

For those who attended meetings in 2003, the association of beneficiaries in small solidarity groups did not represent an obstacle—an impediment that I perceived in the other three barrios—to accomplish their individual plans. This pointed to a second external factor: the association of one of the partner NGOs with previous and positive practice in the area. The NGO's resiliency gave applicants the necessary confidence in their relationships with external agents. By the end of this series of presentation meetings, many attendees already formed 3-to-7-member groups and had decided to open their saving accounts, showing their interest and commitment to the program.

REJECTING THE RIGHT TO SELF-DEVELOPMENT

A key factor in the success of Ciudadanía Plena was that the incentive to improve people's quality of life was so attractive to beneficiaries that they were highly motivated, even though it represented some sacrifice. The effort was not intended to become a subsidy nor an individual endeavor. Beyond the tangible benefits, the effort also involved paying back the credit and attending the mandatory workshops. People who openly expressed that they would not participate tended to withdraw unless they believed it was not in their interest to do so. However, misinterpretation and mistrust hindered the cooperative process.

In this regard, a community leader in barrio 23 de Marzo openly anticipated what he had perceived among neighbors, and recalled it in one introductory workshop:

...I was explaining it [the program] to many people. People are on time to the meetings... Here [in the barrio] we know who pays and who does not. People have doubts and comments. This is an important project; our idea is that people get organized. They do not understand the program in a simple way. Many did not identify with the [solidarity] groups.

When the interest is [individual] economic is when people go (Leader of barrio Romulo Gallegos).

The HABITAT-LUZ Foundation, among the partner institutions, was the first external actor to acknowledge the general lack of interest in conforming groups, and had the initiative to contact some community leaders to get their opinion on this issue. At that point, I was invited to attend this meeting. At the event, I expressed my interest in observing and taking notes, of which the group approved.

In this regard, specifically two leaders of barrio Miraflores offered an open and sincere explanation of the events. Leaders themselves, as well as other inhabitants of the barrio, had abandoned the program and the activities associated with it at this moment because they had sensed a political strategy behind the program's goals and felt excluded from the planning of activities. Responding to this general concern, HABITAT-LUZ and Cesap's agents clarified in every meeting their role as external agents and facilitators in the development of their communities with no political affiliation or economic interest in regard to Ciudadanía Plena, other than to benefit the communities and consequently, their inhabitants. Moreover, it was the responsibility of the NGOs to identify the political divergences that would have affected people's participation, and to discuss with other program agents alternative solutions to this and other conflicting issues in order to guarantee the effective inclusion of all social actors. They committed to keep the dialogue open with the communities and offered their office spaces for conducting meetings and workshops to assess disagreement and discontent.

Issue 1: The nature of politics in the barrio

The confrontation between politically-opposing groups was more evident in barrio Miraflores than in the other three communities. While in barrios Rómulo Gallegos, 23 de Marzo, and Angelica de Lusinchi the community organizations were directly associated with the ruling party, leaders in barrio Miraflores expressed their opposition to

the municipal and national government, which affected their involvement and opportunity to access benefits. I observed how in barrio Miraflores, some external political groups, including a more recent group supported by the Municipality, constantly confronted the community organization, and threatened its legal status. It was obvious that this confrontation represented the first factor that influenced people's participation as the group openly manifested its discontent and tried to influence residents.

The political rupture between the two instances of government in the neighborhood, municipal and state, and the local demands for attention from government agents were a constant. Leaders stated that they themselves did not feel pleased with the work of the Municipality and pointed out that they did not receive recognition after obtaining benefits from the negotiations with the regional government. They also affirmed that they had worked for the community, although they were clear to express their political tendency. They thought that the municipality had worked against the communities because it had tried to impose their own community leaders. Nevertheless, they trusted the non-governmental organizations to which they spoke in confidence about their frustration and anxiety while working for the community.

The fact that the local group was affiliated with the political opposition to the municipal government affected their cooperation and participation negatively. Instead, in the other three barrios, political affiliation with the mayor and his government was notable. Leaders were willing to participate and encouraged neighbors to participate. In general, when there was no political empathy, neighbors felt dissatisfied with the work carried out by the local institutions.

The research reached a significant conclusion. The presence of the NGOs during the implementation was important in keeping the unbiased perspective of the development program. As seen in Ciudadanía Plena, the HABITAT-LUZ foundation

followed a dialogue approach to interact with community leaders, who later understood the objectivity behind the program and the responsibility of the NGOs in preserve it. As a result, the leaders committed to integrating the group of beneficiaries once again.

Issue 2: The credit requirements

The second negative factor on people's interest in Ciudadanía Plena was the expressed difficulty to obtain the required documentation needed to fill out the credit application and the high cost of this process for low-income people. After the first contacts, people usually thought that SAMI was influenced by politics and selective in their decision-making and selection processes. Such an attitude was more conclusive when solicitants did not qualify for a loan, based on technical evaluations or for not submitting all the documents. In these cases, people needed to attribute their personal failure to an external cause.

This issue proved not to be necessarily true, but an excuse. A high number of applicants had not paid their electricity bills, had not legalized land titles, updated IDs or gained permanent residence status, even though the local government carried out such processes of legalization in their communities at no cost. "Traveling" to the municipal offices in the city center demanded time and money to pay for transportation, but was not an impossible task to accomplish. We have to be reasonable; the Venezuelan mentality prevailed: life should be easy, with no effort or compromise. In any case, eventually, the government will provide⁴⁷.

Nevertheless, even when an applicant did not qualify on first attempt, he or she was encouraged to work on getting all the documents with the assurance that the program was going to be available when he or she was ready. Moreover, and for the benefit of residents, the program offered citizenship education to all at no cost, with the hope that

⁴⁷ The mechanism to establish social justice relations is through the State and the interventionist democracy, and not through autonomous action in society (De Viana 1999).

citizens would get involved in the process of reflection on their personal and group conditions and, at the same time, add additional time to collect the missing documentation. The practice proved that, in all cases, only a few individuals (less than 10%) other than those who qualified for credits immediately, attended the sessions. This outcome showed that people had a low level of motivation to be part of a self-development training program because the final product that was marketed—money in the form of a credit—was not possible to obtain rapidly.

Issue 3: The organization into solidarity groups

There is always one person [member of his solidarity group] who does not act properly (Resident of Angelica de Lusinchi).

The third factor that diminished the initial interest of many people, to the extent that they withdraw from the program, was the basic request to cform local support groups on order to self-guarantee the return on the investment. The so-called solidarity groups (*grupo mancomunado*) were conceived as voluntary associations of 3 to 9 people from the same community who decide to become each other's co-guarantors of their loans. Each individual holds responsibility for himself/herself and for the other members of the group. The program expects that they watch for the faithful fulfillment of payments in a collective way, an attitude that the citizenship education process attempts to externalize and strengthen.

When the promoters introduced this program to the communities, they did not indicate to the audience the way to proceed with this requirement. However, people widely accepted the conditions and filled out credit applications without understanding the responsibilities of making this group commitment. In subsequent meetings and in practically all the barrios, people's attitude against the group scheme was steady. The main reasons were distrust and lack of confidence. More still, the program did not allow

individuals from the same family to be part of the same solidarity group because this condition, as stated by the program coordinators and the NGOs, tended to increase the possibility that the group would provide support, as relatives support and look after each other, even when they have failed.

As a consequence of the lack of effective communication and personal commitment on part of some beneficiaries, many people did not accept joining these groups, a condition that forced program agents to put into practice more effective information strategies based on values such as confidence, responsibility, and communication, not on insecurity and fear. The response was slow; nevertheless, neighbors have been creating their own groups and are now observing the results obtained in other groups, thanks to the effort of neighbors and the continuous relationship based on open dialogue.

Issue 4: The local economic advisor and promoter

The program appointed a group of economic advisors, known as local promoters, to contact and properly inform potential beneficiaries in the communities, prepare their credit applications, follow up the works and supervise monthly payments. The municipality was in charge of their hiring and pay. Each advisor was responsible for one parish and for the follow up of between 100 and 150 housing and micro-enterprise projects and credits.

These professionals were usually identified as a factor that influenced people's involvement in the program. Local people directly identified these advisors with the municipal government. People from barrios 23 de Marzo and Angelica de Lusinchí pointed out how their advisors were concerned with people's wellbeing and self-development, attitude that contributed to their acceptance. Nevertheless, this was not the case for barrios Miraflores and Rómulo Gallegos, where facilitators did not seem to pay

attention to people's demands and expectations properly, causing them to fail to attend meetings and training sessions. Furthermore, people felt excluded when they were not informed about schedules and activities. They associated this with political control and exclusion on the part of the municipality and the mismanagement of the program as not addressing their demands.

The negative effects of the advisors' behavior and attitude were gradually overcome with the implementation of a series of workshops planned to improve their communicative and social skills.

Other identified issues

Everything was just fine but there is misinformation... I know a lot of people who have been chosen but they think that it is better to remain apart because they will have to pay for others (Resident of Miraflores).

I identified other issues that were not directly stated by the beneficiaries, but clearly respond to the nature of the program. One of these issues is the selection process of beneficiaries. As many government-funded programs, the national donor mandated the program to submit a detailed list of applicants and their specific projects to finance. Due to time constraints and datelines imposed by FIDES in Caracas, the invitation to participate in the program was widely open and promoted in the four communities. During the promotional phase, every individual who had curiosity or basic understanding of the program was recruited, only to fill out a list of projects and an amount attached to them.

The sustainability of Ciudadanía Plena required the allocation of funding in projects with high possibilities of return. Preconditions such as illegal residency, unclear land ownership, unemployment or insufficient household income were not evaluated during the 2003 selection process, but were later used to reject applications. While

beneficiaries directly identified these preconditions, other internal conditions, values, and beliefs came out from informal conversations, such as the paternalism and opportunism, and the construction of false expectations and promises during the political campaigns⁴⁸. Consequently, many previously selected beneficiaries remained excluded for technical reasons, a situation that one community leader was able to interpret:

People withdrew [from the program] because they could not afford to make the payments, because they have economic problems. They think that they can obtain subsidized housing from the State Governor... or that they can get construction supplies at no cost (Community Leader of 23 de Marzo).

The NGOs and the facilitators had the responsibility to stimulate beneficiary motivation to participate. After hearing people's exposition of motives, these agents stated that most of the staff of Ciudadanía Plena was interested in working with the beneficiaries and for the benefit of the communities. Nevertheless, I perceived how all the official ceremonies, in which beneficiaries received their credits and certificates of attendance from the hands of the city mayor, or another local authority, had a political connotation. Beneficiaries and non-governmental organizations shared the same perception. From their comments and clarifications, everybody agreed to call other residents to ease their doubts about the program and thus, to stimulate their participation if it was their desire.

In the sphere of the program, stakeholders always evaluated the role of the government and the governmental policies toward community development in general and in the scope of the local initiative. From these discussions, the program coordinators concluded the need to carry out processes of self-evaluation and to measure the of impact

⁴⁸ During the 2004 electoral campaign, the State Governor visited the communities, granted land titles and donated a number of finished dwellings to the poorest families or to those families living on environmentally hazardous areas.

indicators, which provided the necessary input to enhance the perception of partners, their performance and the quality of results.

The technocratic vision of the problem

The technocratic vision of the problem was an appreciation made by SAMI representatives, who needed to respond to the technical prerequisite of FIDES to justify the substitution of applicants who had decided to decline benefits. The real personal and collective causes and motivations were not as important as the need to reallocate the resources. The responses were the opinion of beneficiaries who could only answer a closed-question format designed by SAMI.

If the interpretation of issues by community members suggested the prior conclusions, the technocratic top-down vision indicated a different outcome. Program staff members of Ciudadanía Plena conducted an evaluation of their statistics in December 2003 to analyze the reasons why people withdrew or excluded themselves from participation. According to SAMI, the first cause was voluntary desertion, a condition that accounted for 77% of the 137 beneficiaries who withdrew at that moment.

Secondly, 12% of the withdrawals accounted for individuals who consistently manifested their lack of interest and had to be dismissed without their authorization, but with the endorsement of their community organizations. A third cause, identified in 8 beneficiaries (4% of the withdrawals), related to people who moved out of the barrios, a condition that automatically excluded them from receiving financial support, at least from Ciudadanía Plena. Finally, 12 applicants (7% of the withdrawals) had no economic or technical viability to justify their applications.

Table 20: Rate of withdrawal as of December 2003.

Initial number of applicants MICRO-ENTERPRISES COMPONENT	65	
Initial number of applicants HOUSING COMPONENT	296	
Withdrawal from MICRO-ENTERPRISES COMPONENT	21	32%
Withdrawal from HOUSING COMPONENT	157	53%
Total	178	49%

Source: SAMI

Table 21: Reasons for withdrawing from the program according to SAMI.

	Number by type of project		Percentage from total withdrawals		Total
	Micro-enterprise	Housing	Micro-enterprise	Housing	
Voluntary Withdrawal	17	120	9.6%	67.4%	77%
Did not show interest in the program	0	21	0%	11.8%	11.8%
Non-resident of the barrio	2	6	1.1%	3.4%	4.5%
No financial or technical viability	2	10	1.1%	5.6%	6.7%

Source: SAMI

Representatives from FIDES, in communications sent from their main office in Caracas, required the municipality to submit all the rejected applications in order to approve their substitution with other beneficiaries from the same communities. As a legal requirement, the local community organizations endorsed this documentation that supported the report. The leaders' approval was a legal provision applied to this kind of procedure to involve their communities.

WHAT BENEFICIARIES REVEALED ABOUT THE CITIZEN EDUCATION PROCESS DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE.

The community training cycle was first initiated in Barrio Miraflores in June of 2003, followed by Rómulo Gallegos, 23 de Marzo and Angelica de Lusinchi, in that order. The activity counted on the collaboration of facilitators appointed by the municipality and the supervision of the local NGOs, which observed the process and provided useful recommendations to improve the content and sequence of workshops. In order to meet with the inhabitants of barrios Miraflores and Rómulo Gallegos, introductory workshops were held in locations outside the communities, one to two miles away, since none of the communities offered a comfortable location to gather a large number of people. This decision required the beneficiaries to use public transportation or to walk a certain distance, with additional cost and time involved. Nevertheless, despite the excellent conditions of the meeting places, beneficiaries pointed out in informal conversations their disapproval of attending these meetings outside their own communities.

Even though people complained, they had no other choice than to attend the citizenship education component, an initial requirement for obtaining a loan. Residents of barrio 23 de Marzo counted on facilities within their community—UNDEL, a community unit, and the local school—which had been used for different activities and distinct organizations. In barrio Angelica de Lusinchi people could gather in a small health center and in a local Christian church, depending on their availability. In both barrios, when asked, people associated their attendance to meetings with the proximity of these locations.

As part of the tasks that required the participation of the group, neighbors took part in preliminary participatory community assessments, in which they expressed their collective and individual expectations. In general, people pointed out topics of discussion

such as the local culture, the education, the neighborhood security, and stated values such as harmony and peace, community life, joyfulness in the families, communication, faith, responsibility, and solidarity. Furthermore, people stood for their jobs and occupations, supporting initiatives that contributed to strengthen projects such as their local micro-enterprises, the education of their youth, the presence of efficient community associations, and their willingness to collaborate in community issues.

Barrio Miraflores accounted for the highest number of original solicitants (with 174 applications evaluated, see table 19 on page 218). From this number, only 30% attended and completed the citizenship education cycles held during 2003 and 2004. Nevertheless, attendance gradually increased after a consciousness building campaign mainly targeted at community leaders, who promoted the benefits of the program in their communities and encouraged people's participation. The local participatory assessment helped neighbors identify the physical needs of the neighborhood: the scarcity of parks and trees, schools, sewer, street pavement, medical assistance, while neighbors reflected on the faithfulness, guidance and the proper advice to revert materialism, inefficient administration, and ignorance.

With the application of a similar participatory assessment strategy, participants from barrio Rómulo Gallegos were able to develop a shared present and future vision of their community. The group contributed a series of values to the dialogue without setting any prioritizing criteria. They pointed out the following values in the same order they were mentioned: love, responsibility, respectability, friendship, union, health, reciprocity, mutual contribution, solidarity, strength, harmony, dignity, respect and self-esteem.

Without the imposition of preset agendas, the participants assessed some of Rómulo Gallegos's physical needs, such as a solution to the constant floods, the construction of a local community center, a school and a sport facility, tree planting, the

construction of a local clinic, policy enforcement, access to public transportation and street pavement.

I want to see my community grow... let us change our way of thinking... that we cannot since we are poor, it is necessary that everyone gets involved (Neighbor's opinion about Rómulo Gallegos).



Illustration 28: Participatory assessment in Barrio Miraflores.



Illustration 29: Participatory assessment in Barrio Rómulo Gallegos.

In addition to discussing community values, residents of Barrio 23 de Marzo stated their willingness to open the community to others—external agents, NGOs, other communities—and thanked the municipality for the execution of necessary infrastructure works, expected for years, such as street pavement, sidewalks, and a sewer system. People felt privileged because they had accessible and affordable opportunities in Ciudadanía Plena. Nevertheless, they pointed out the scarcity of social services and investments in other public areas, such as la *cañada* (an open rain and sewer water drainage), parks and green areas, and health.



Illustration 30: Introductory workshop in Barrio 23 de Marzo.



Illustration 31: Meeting with community leaders in Barrio A. de Lusinchi.

In Barrio Angelica de Lusinchi, it was evident how the pilot experience had contributed to set the basis for the implementation of the second phase, since some of the residents had benefited and had accomplished their individual projects. In addition to the values and community problems shared in the meetings and workshops, which in fact were very similar to the ones expressed in the other communities, according to the observations and conversations during and after these events, those who attended the participatory assessment workshops affirmed that the program had had a major impact in some of the households.

As a demonstration of the acceptance of the program, residents expressed their comments straightforwardly, were open to receive visits of the promoters and facilitators, and were willing to group themselves into solidarity groups.

It seemed something very positive to me. I received a credit to have my dwelling repaired. Later I received a second credit to supply my small grocery store. The improvements are noteworthy. The best investment I have made... is the one that remains.

In various opportunities, beneficiaries in the four communities pointed out the importance of taking care of their communities and their problems rather than political issues.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMMUNITY'S RESPONSE

During 2003, barrio 23 de Marzo had the highest percentage of attendance to workshops and number of credits granted (37), accounting for 48% of the total number of former applicants from that community (Table 22). Yet the number of credits allocated accounted for less than half of the initial number of solicitants in that community. In barrio Angelica de Lusinchí, only 33% (12 individuals) had completed the training program during the period, representing the community with the lowest initial turnout. A similar condition was repeated in both barrio Rómulo Gallegos (with 37% or 16 credits) and barrio Miraflores (with 34% or 35 credits). Although barrio Miraflores counted the highest number of solicitants (183), only a small group initiated and successfully completed the training program during 2003.

Stated by community residents, the lack of adequate and immediate response and permanent follow-up on part of the promoting institutions during the period when the program was not implemented, and the slight interest of the community associations in supporting the objectives of the program at that moment largely motivated the poor turnover. Subsequently, after the program strengthened the leaders' trust and confidence, the number of participants fairly increased, as new individuals requested their incorporation to Ciudadanía Plena, a result that confirmed the influence, at times moderate, at times excessive, that the leaders had on the barrio inhabitants.

Meeting attendance in the communities and personal conversations with beneficiaries confirmed the fact that they were mostly interested in the characteristics of

the loan, its amount, conditions, and requirements. However, some beneficiaries also responded positively and pointed out their expectations, as quoted in their own words:

Before, I did not want to compromise. Now I see that the form of payment is not so hard... Because I know about the positive experience that other neighbors had had.

We are capable of becoming independent... but for those who want to be independent, how should we start?

We come for a dream that we want to become reality... to be positive and real and that we have a better life.

Table 22: Number of credits granted in 2003 and 2004.

Community	Credits granted in 2003		Credits granted in 2004	
	Housing	Microenterp.	Housing	Microenterp.
Barrio Angélica de Lusinchí	12	2	45	24
Barrio 23 de Marzo	37	0	49	12
Barrio Miraflores	35	17	30	69
Barrio Rómulo Gallegos	16	7	8	1
Totals	96	26	132	106

Source: SAMI

Despite the low turnout in the training workshops during these events, I captured the expectations of community members with regard to the citizenship education process that was promoted:

I do not have money but I have my hands, my will and my desire to change my present condition...If we do not come to learn, we cannot come to demand. I already have spoken to my neighbors [about the program].

[I am looking forward] to have better relationships... as the group that is being formed.

That everyone who attends [the workshops] get to know each other.

We are going to try to improve and even offer employment.

Now with the [political and economic] crisis we want a commitment... to be responsible.

Likewise, with regard to the program as a whole, people thought:

It seems to me that this project is the best thing that has come to the neighborhood.

It seems important [the program] because there is not another institution that can give us a credit. Any bank gives credits at these low rates.

We know it is hard, but one must fight.

The workshop encourages us. I brought many negative things. The program works with the persons and I am very motivated. That is my current thought.

There are neighbors that I do not know...It [Ciudadanía Plena] encourages us to know each other and to see with whom we can share the credit.

Before [the program implementation], I did not want to attend. Now I do not want to leave it.

People's comments about their communities pointed out:

The difference relies on the commitment and the effort.

I expect to improve my life conditions and my neighborhood.

I want to see the community grow... we will change that way of thinking... that we are not able because we are poor... it is necessary that we get involved.

Likewise, neighbors expressed some fears:

I am afraid of the success of the experience. I am afraid of the co-debtor [failure, distrust and confrontation].

I need the confidence of the group, because I have doubts about the solidarity group.

The persons speak but do not know. There is not respect.

... Fear to fail in the fulfillment of the requirements and payments.

I am concerned with the current economic situation [crisis].

Carrying out this type of participatory strategy allowed the staff to reflect on the singularity and individuality of each barrio. However, in all cases, from workshop to workshop, people moved between uncertainty and aggressiveness to participation and recognition. The psychosocial evaluation conducted in conjunction with the facilitation of workshops pointed to a series of attitudes toward these activities, which beneficiaries took for granted.

I noticed that beneficiaries attended the sessions mainly with the purpose of obtaining financial assistance and completing the mandatory training process as quickly as possible in order to fulfill the requirement to receive the funding, after it had been approved by the local financial analysts and SAMI. Confronting these circumstances, which in fact, repeated in every preliminary meeting and workshop, representatives of Ciudadanía Plena were emphatic when affirming that more than granting credits to the poor, the program pursued education in citizenship values and attitudes.

Results of the initial local workshops demonstrated the willingness of the beneficiaries to go through a process of self-evaluation and transformation, anticipating a positive impact of the training program. People accepted the recommendations and the suggestions of either the economist in terms of financial advice or the architect in terms of technical-constructive advice, and felt themselves motivated because these professionals had visited and instructed them directly in their households; an event that they never thought would be possible, due to their social, economic and even human limitations.

Now we can do things on our own...without the interference of the community association.

Table 23: Conclusions from focus group (2004). ⁴⁹

⁴⁹ The participatory assessment was held in December 2004. 50 beneficiaries were randomly selected, properly informed, and invited to attend. 33 persons (66%) responded to the invitation.

Quotes from sub-group 1	
LEARNING EXPERIENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I practice the forgiveness • I learned to be more organized, to listen and not to offend. • I learned to share • I want to progress, to reach beyond what we expect. • I learned how to better relate with neighbors and relatives. • There is an illusion • I learned to share points of view • To allow us to go around the barrio • To support our communities • To give and receive support 	HOW WE IMPROVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having new friends • Reaching consensus • Being tolerant within the family • Sharing with people with different opinions • Having better relationships with culturally different people • Meditating to reduce the stress • Not being scared • Not overlapping household problems with job related problems
Quotes from sub-group 2	
LEARNING EXPERIENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I learned forgiveness and union • To develop self-esteem • I learned to set goals • The experience reduced stress • I learned to communicate among the group • I am supportive of the psychosocial education • I have to bring these workshops to schools, markets, the community • I learned how to be a full citizen • I acknowledge and value saving • I learned about discipline 	HOW WE IMPROVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving attention • Being patient, kind and respectful • Sharing with others and knowing their families • Losing the worry to have debts • Forgiving and living in peace • Supporting the family and providing them with respect and kindness • Having more relations • Not leaving apart
Quotes from sub-group 3	
LEARNING EXPERIENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I learned to walk, to enjoy and to save • I learned to be enthusiastic • I had personal development • I reflected on unity and sharing • I learned not to be afraid, to succeed and have money • I learned to know my partners, to compromise and do well • I learned to get along with others • I learned about relaxation 	WHAT WE IMPROVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and accepting other people • Practicing tolerance and collaboration • Being patient, smiling, and valuing other persons • Having better family relations • Improving communication

THE PROGRAM'S LOCAL PROMOTER AS FACTOR OF DEVELOPMENT.

Changing perception of the work team while engaging in dialogue.

Since the very beginning of the implementation phase of the program, a multidisciplinary representation of twelve local government agents and NGO representatives integrated the initial team. This group participated in a series of orientation-and-reflection workshops that summed a total of approximately 80 hours. The first sessions during 2002 were characterized by an almost complete absence of representatives from the communities, who were only invited to attend some of the workshops.

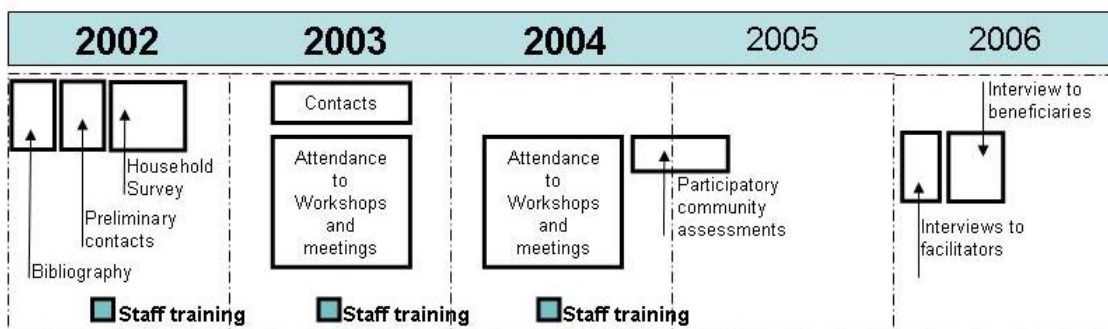


Figure 13: Research Activities Timeline. Attendance to staff training.

Such initial encounters, which I identified as the “*first moment of reflection*”, were carried out to corroborate in the group the same principle that was validated in the communities: that “beneficiaries—individuals and members of their respective communities—are not the only ones to evaluate their current condition”. Moreover, this same principle promotes that development agents should learn to behave properly and work in a collaborative way, to communicate effectively and transfer knowledge, to

interact with others, to mediate conflicting situations in the work environment, in the office or the field, to improve their attitudes and social skills, and to reflect on values”.

In two workshops during that first year, I followed up on the group’s evaluation of the program according to their individual and group experiences, results, and criticisms. The conclusions underlined the institutional achievements up to that moment. An important outcome of these events emphasized the acceptance of the public-private network that had developed and expanded despite the divergent approaches and ideological motivations. In this sense, the program had managed to integrate diverse stakeholders, which had ensured a certain degree of transparency and institutional sustainability. The group, as every member consistently agreed, emphasized the commitment to persevere in their relationship with the financing actor, FIDES, which had controlled and ruled the allocation of national funding. Moreover, it put emphasis on the practice of more efficient coordination of time and dialogue in spite of work agendas, and the availability of resources to assure success.

In a “*second moment of reflection*”, during three workshops held in 2003 that I observed, the team identified and evaluated personal issues affecting the organization—the consortium—and its performance. One of the conclusions pointed out to a definition of the development agent-beneficiary relationship that would “transcend the client-provider arrangement to interact in personal and affective grounds, without losing the professional scope of work”. It demanded more involvement of both parties in the construction of the process, and the understanding and acceptance that people and outcomes were not perfect and that personal conflicts were shared by both parties. Both were components of the problem and thus the situation involved every stakeholder. In this way, participants learned to yield and accept the position and opinion of others.

Table 24: *First moment of reflection.* Notes from meetings held in 2002.

2002 Group Event 1: Workshop: Initial expectations.	
WHAT WE HAVE DONE RIGHT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have achieved an institutional network. • We have advanced despite diverse points of view. • To work in a team and to be able to integrate distinct actors. • The quality of the group of professionals has been demonstrated. • Data gathering has been accomplished. • Perseverance upon financial agent. • We are not pessimists. • We meet despite the busy schedules. • We have had a positive perspective to achieve results. The pilot experience stimulated this phase. • We have reached a clearer definition of the Project. 	WHAT WE COULD IMPROVE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More and better coordination to link the parts to make the work more effective. • To learn that anybody is perfect. • To carry on concrete actions. • To integrate the beneficiary in the construction of this process. • To establish the type of personnel more suitable to the project. • Better functionality. • The transformation of the project into a public policy.
2002 Group Event 2: Workshop: Objectives and reflection.	
WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pilot experience proved the cooperation scheme (actors), the responsibility, the confidence, and the distinct styles and dynamisms. • We still generate trust. • The results will be the responsibility of all actors. • The institutional improvement effort. • Consensus (shared decisions) • Willingness to listen to each other • The recognition that everyone is important. 	WHAT TO CONSIDER FROM NOW ON: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To clarify the objectives. • The clarity of the information. • To learn in the field work. • To bring responsibility to the job. • Knowledge. • To have clear delimitations of the project. • To promote the integration of the consortium. • To success • To have confidence • To compromise • Tranquility after initial anxiety • To keep the team work • To promote full citizenship

Table 25: *Second moment of reflection.* Notes from meetings in 2003 and 2004.

Work Group Event 3: Workshop: Objectives, reflection and mission.	
<p>HOW I FEEL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy; I like to relate to people and what I have received recently. • I feel secure • Every challenge must be assumed. I am willing to be with the people and assist them. • I feel good because I have the capacity to support the program and I have learnt. • Enthusiastic; with questions and expectations, and the desire to give, receive, and share. There is confidence. • We have resources, capabilities, compromise, and expect results. In any process there are fear and difficulties. We will be successful. • We must be optimistic. • I like the group. I feel we are getting the connection. We are putting effort together. • I need to learn to trust. My fear in these difficult times is that beneficiaries do not respond. But I believe. • FACILITATOR: I feel that the group is becoming a team. 	<p>OBSTACLES AND FEARS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not seeing these as obstacles but as situations that could be confronted. • You are what you believe. It depends on how I see the environment (positive or negative); the vision that you have. • To surpass the insecurities. • The communities. It is their learning and our learning. • The forgiveness • The money (credit) that delays • To the improper response of beneficiaries. • The need to articulate or to unite the parts to develop them as a single block. • To understand that it is an effort of all the institutions. • Fear to miss the recognition of the work of others. • To support the projects allowing people to see the results. We have to continue building. • The process will continue independently of the people that get involved. • The financial resources and the false expectations. • The community is missing in this process; the lack of mutual confidence can increase. • We must build the vision with the community. • To know how to interpret people's needs. • Planning does not necessarily reduce uncertainty.
Work Group Event 4: workshop to define the Program's Mission	
<p>EXPECTATIONS OF THE GROUP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To accomplish more productive outcomes and that doubts are clarified. • To establish a methodology • To know more about the project • To improve performance at work • Shared vision and mission • To learn more • To generate thoughts on prosperity. 	
Work Group Event 5: Workshop to follow up objectives and mission	
<p>WHAT CONCRETE ACHIEVEMENTS TO EXPECT AT THIS POINT:</p> <p>Micro-Enterprise that are formalized, a dignified habitat for all the communities and citizens that fully exercise their rights and duties.</p> <p>Citizen: successful, confident, productive and entrepreneurial.</p> <p>Environment: freedom, well-being, habitat, dignified housing.</p> <p>Micro-Enterprise: employment generation.</p>	

This course of reflection allowed the group to set the organization's mission, a common exercise in local private and public organization participatory assessments. This definition laid the foundations that guided the work, as quoted at that time in this way:

We [Ciudadanía Plena] are a team of professionals committed to the development of the local economic base in the municipality of Maracaibo, which, through the institutional practice, offers social and economic opportunities of self- realization.

In following processes that a local agent, external to the organization, facilitated, the team sought to reorient the management of the institution, to make the work environment a more congenial and cooperative space, and to promote means to confer recognition and obtain personal satisfaction for the work done. It was in this way that cultural performance materialized. A better definition of the team's mission thus provided its *raison d'être*; what the group was and stood for, the activities it should have done and the processes to follow, the importance of its members to the organization, the expected results and the geographical context of intervention. At the same time, a revised mission stated the most representative values of the consortium, the products to deliver, the services and the results, and the ideal attributes of its human resources.

We [Ciudadanía Plena] are a committed, productive and enthusiastic team, which contributes to the spiritual and material prosperity of communities in Maracaibo, by promoting, educating, offering technical aid, encouraging a culture of savings and granting credits, to strengthen the development of the means of production, the fulfillment (exercise) of citizenship rights and duties and people's active participation in the exercise of social solidarity.

In 2004, the group resumed meetings after six months of inactivity in this regard, in a new series of *work-and-reflection workshops*, which continued until 2005. Once again, they aimed at dialogue about the expectations of the distinct actors and to reflect on the responsiveness of their mission in the third moment of reflection. I detected the

interest of municipal employees in learning new knowledge and to fulfill people's demands and expectations successfully. Likewise, the group was interested in achieving the objectives of the citizenship education workshops, and going through the same process with the barrio inhabitants.

Program agents in regular contact with the communities particularly requested this petition. Consequently, these professionals later attended the workshop sessions themselves. In this way, they minimized their anxiety while working in the community and "better connected" to the program's philosophy and their "clients". Despite the positive impact on people's attitude toward community work, I noticed how the coordinator of the program imposed quotas for new clients that the economic advisors had to fulfill. FIDES required adjustments in the way the credit had to be distributed, therefore the efficiency of Ciudadanía Plena tended to be interpreted in terms of credit allocated to the community.

As a principle, the group stood up for their integration, encounter, and an open agenda: *Integration* to be able to carry out the many tasks in collaboration, which they considered a personal challenge; *encounter*, for the role of the group and the contribution to its self-improvement; and an *open agenda*, to achieve the objectives of integration between the partner institutions and the municipality. They also believed that professional support and facilitation was essential.

The discussion of results of the pilot experience in Angelica de Lusinchi, and the new practice over the last two years of implementation encouraged optimism. It also set up new expectations concerning positive outcomes of the second phase. As result of this collective dialogue, the group achieved a better definition of the program's theoretical framework, its objectives, and the interpretation of the assumptions tied to the concept of citizen and citizenship.

Table 26: Group's assumptions tied to the concept of citizenship.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic needs guaranteed • With dignified spaces for household and community activities • Employed in a secured job • With social security • With social relations • With capabilities to apply in the market sector • With a proactive attitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned about the public good • Participative • With high level of self-realization • Democratic • Capable of perceiving opportunities • Responsible • Informed
<p><i>Source:</i> Conclusions of meeting to discuss the selection of indicators to assess results. 05/19/2004.</p>	

Representatives of the NGOs stated that every person to get involved in this type of work should not initiate his or her assignments without knowing what the experience entailed, and pursue his or her integration in the group. They also acknowledged the importance of applying technical knowledge and transferring it to the local organizations and groups. The need to carry out further presentations in the communities was again confirmed so that residents clearly acknowledged the details of the program in order to “avoid misinterpretations and conflicts”. With regard to the philosophy of the program, it was pointed out that “it was a decision of all to maintain it [Ciudadanía Plena] as a local development program and that the credits remain as the mean to achieve it”. Besides, “the public good was a condition and responsibility of everyone.”

I identified the values associated with the work group such as transparency, responsibility, mutual recognition, confidence and commitment. I found out that each staff member followed different dynamics in the management of tasks, while assuming that the recognition of cooperative effort and mutual agreement were ways to accomplish the strengthening of the organization. Likewise, approaches to collaborative participation

and the active involvement of the communities were validated as supporting present and future participatory endeavors.

I also recognized the political cost in this regard in order to function, so that the program should be consolidated and politically sustainable in the future. This translated into a solid purpose: the formulation and accomplishment of a public policy, apart from the influence and control of political parties or other local or national structure of power. The city mayor was aware and supportive of the citizenship education and credit processes. Nevertheless, his sporadic presence in public events and his use of the program's activities as a platform to project his political image, a constant during my period of evaluation, were perceived and interpreted in the same way by the beneficiaries. Members of the consortium were aware of its implications in the opinion of beneficiaries and attempted to maintain an unbiased presence in the communities, and also to set the basis for the interaction of local political actors, since the risk of criticism and negative response was clearly recognized.

Community leaders, neighbors and program agents criticized the absence of input from the communities in the early phase of the program, which lessened the mutual confidence and induced a misinterpretation of beneficiaries' needs and expectations. However, the timely comments of leaders and neighbors made the agents of development aware of possible failures in implementation. As a consequence, the program reoriented its participatory approaches toward carrying out open community meetings, participatory evaluations, focus groups, and surveys to update household data.

In principle, the dialogue should work without any leadership or set agenda (supported by Bohm 1996). Nevertheless, due to the low level of integration and self-management that characterized the communities, the constant presence of a facilitator in local meetings helped the group go on to the issues that needed the program's attention.

Every development agent who had contact with the communities assumed the role of facilitator. These professionals coordinated and facilitated the dialogue, mediated minor confrontations and presented the information concerning Ciudadanía Plena to the audience. There was an agenda that needed to be followed and certain objectives to be accomplished in these meetings, however, the facilitator usually invited the audience to introduce other topics and highlight other issues, which were addressed in the conversation, assessment, and decision-making when needed.

Program representatives and local people met regularly and sustained such dialogues in their own communities. In this sense, and despite their experience in the field, their role in this dialogue improved over time with the identification and strengthening of their Neuro-linguistic skills, and their application. I identified these conceptual bases, which guided the facilitators' work and inter-connections in their comments to the local audiences. Their work in the community started with their own self-reflection, by the understanding and control of their fears and attitudes. Subsequently, the constant interaction with their clients in the barrios, almost on a daily basis, allowed them to get to know and understand their social, economic and subjective realities better.

To reach a shared vision of the organization, it was thought that it should guide and point out the direction of the work, the possibilities, the desired state of excellence, the reality to be built, and the opportunities to create values. The vision should set a deadline for the achievement of these objectives based on accountability, recognition, and impact of the work undertaken. Following these guidelines, the vision that the group concluded took into account the following statements proposed by some co-workers:

We will accomplish, in the next five years, the presence of confident citizens, entrepreneurs, generators of wealth in an environment of liberty and wellbeing.

We emphasize our capacity to provide service, happiness, productivity of the training, saving, credit and management processes and by having adequate and comfortable installations.

We are recognized by the local, national and international communities by our contribution to sustainable municipal development -economic, spiritual and social.

In work meetings, the team reflected on the weakness or risk involved when there is not a continuous presence of committed and trained personnel in the institutions. Moreover, the team acknowledged that these personnel should be familiar with all the concepts and definitions tied to citizenship and values and to be able to transmit them to others. Here lies the importance of revising the workshop strategies constantly, to guarantee the sustainability of the program by means of recognizing people's values, attitudes and local identities. In the planning process, it is important to recognize the mental maps, the individual and personal relations, the motivation to discuss citizenship issues, and the willingness to participate. All these become important attributions of the facilitator, who is trained in such group skills and attitudes in the constant practice of learning, interaction, and reflection.

Following these reflections, most of the members of the group stated that it was necessary to build up the institution to generate people's confidence and responsibility in delivering the service with a corporative perspective. The meetings of the management committee reached these objectives, and representatives of the local stakeholder institutions continuously assessed the actions of the program for improving the procedures, the use of resources and the activities.

The local university evaluated some results. The multidisciplinary approach to management pointed out a series of conditions. One participant highlighted the difference between the economists' perception and interpretation of the work and the architects' perception and interpretation of the same issues.

The economists, in the role of economic advisor, tended to approach issues guided by their accounting practice and financial expertise to assess the economic output of the institution and the recovery of credit. The architects advocated more effective technical advice in designing, building and following up on the construction of improvement projects and had little or no experience in financing beyond the calculation of construction estimates. The interaction between both professionals allowed the implementation of two different project components (housing and micro-enterprise). From these two types of projects, the housing component required the participation of both professionals in the assessment of the economic profile of the beneficiary and the formulation and follow-up of the housing improvement projects in both, financial and constructive terms. This necessary mutual dependency highlighted the relevance of active participation of one of the NGOs in the program.

The city mayor appointed the director of Ciudadanía Plena based on her professional background. The director, a former university professor of economics, was an expert in micro-financing and micro-enterprises, but had no previous knowledge or practice in physical rehabilitation of barrios or progressive housing. Nevertheless, during the time I conducted the research, the director's expectations matched the objectives of the program, which she validated in all the meetings. As a consequence of her positive and professional attitude, she openly acknowledged the social opportunities that the program had brought and accepted expert advice in topics that were unfamiliar to her. In spite of her motivation, I also believe that her commitment was influenced by decisions made by the municipality—or by the city mayor⁵⁰—in regard to municipal policies, the demands by the national government, or political solutions to make the municipality more accountable to the local electorate.

⁵⁰ Assertion not proven.

We have defended the program because we have not selected any person based on his or her political affiliation or group. It [the program] is open, broad, and representative.

We all have political preferences... We should not bring *la política*. We should inform the politicians about the program so they can show confidence. We cannot ignore the presence of the city mayor.

In more than one occasion, activities were diverted or delayed when solicited by her superiors. Her “economic” function, as municipal agent, was to report the productivity of SAMI in term of credit granted, number of people trained and the financial performance of the community economic advisors.

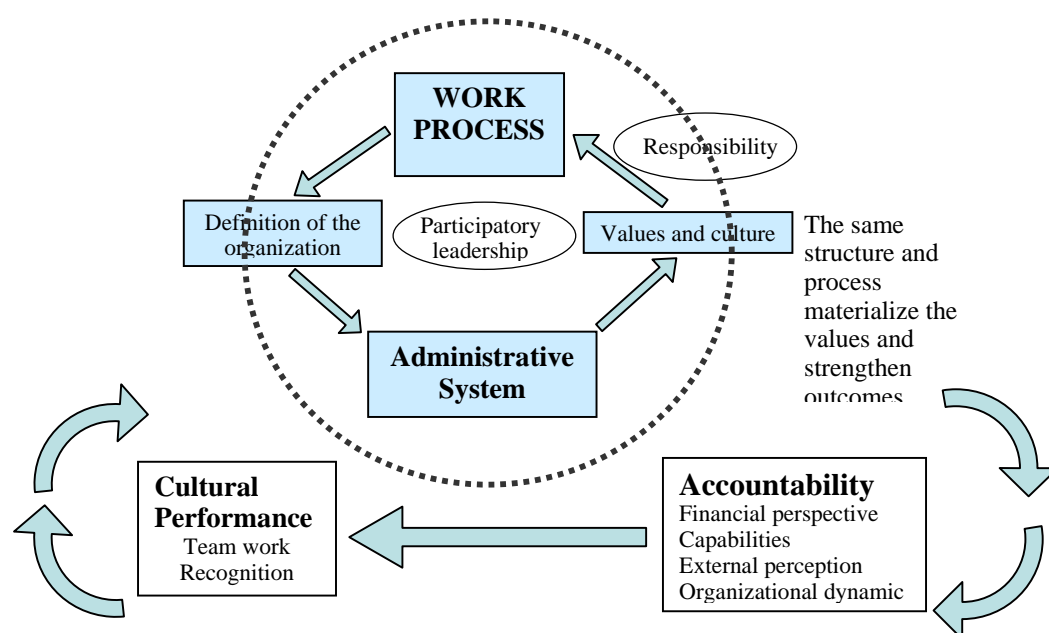


Figure 14: The making of the organization’s vision.

The Director of the HABITAT-LUZ foundation expressed her concern about the lack of qualified personnel working in the field of housing in the barrios who should be responsible for the decisions supported by the beneficiaries. The fear of making mistakes takes as fact that SAMI coordinators should not appoint new professionals because the

economic advisors' performance would be lower if the financial goals of the institution were not reached. This would not help sustain a productive image of the program. Political success was equal to the number of households that benefited and the amount of credit granted in the municipality. According to the objectives of Ciudadanía Plena, its success was equal to citizenship values put into practice by the beneficiaries at the same time they improved their living conditions. Evidently, it was an experiment with positive expectations. The program's long-term impact necessarily required the extension of the program to a higher number of communities within the municipality, the continuous integration of new staff, the reassessment of the training process, the motivation of the group, and the proper incorporation of the already-assisted communities in the efforts of others.

FACILITATOR'S EXPERIENCE DURING THE CITIZEN EDUCATION PROCESS

The participation of professional facilitators positively contributed to achieve the objective of the program in the local communities. I was able to interview three of the five professionals who were hired to facilitate the citizenship education workshops between 2003 and 2006 in order to assess the facilitators' identification with their task and the possible bonds between the learning assumptions and their personal experiences working in the four barrios.

I planned the questionnaire to address the following issues, which Table 27 summarizes and compares (refer to Appendix D for the responses to the questionnaire).

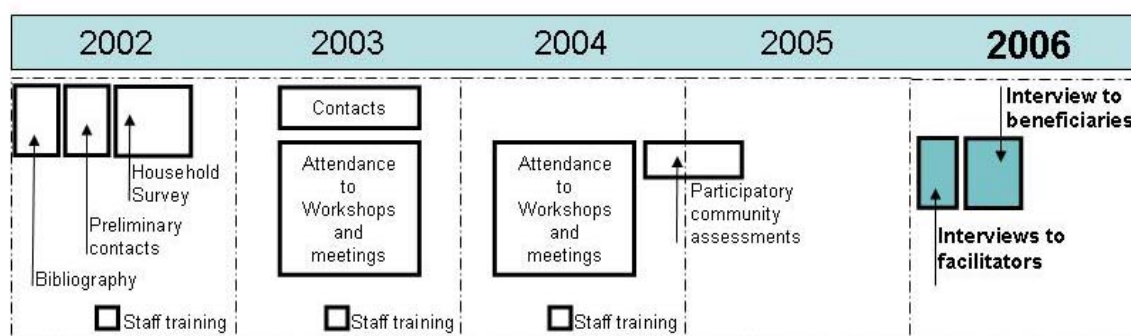


Figure 15: Research Activities Timeline. Interviews with facilitators.

USE OF LEARNING APPROACH

The program's facilitators applied the methodology of Neuro-Linguistic Programming as an important tool in the preparation and implementation of the citizenship education workshops. Their theoretical approach was based on their prior knowledge of the methodology, their previous training in the application of the methodology and their practical implementation in other settings, mostly as attending employees of private and public sector institutions. Concerning this type of implementation of the NLP strategy in the planning of the workshops, they quoted that, at first, the original design of the citizenship education modules contained, as a base, the accelerated learning and reflection experience and the psychological implications of group dynamics on individual achievements. Nevertheless, the facilitators did not base all workshops on these assumptions or put them into practice.

INNOVATIONS IN NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING

Variation and innovation in the form of implementation was, in most cases, influenced by the spontaneity of the facilitators to adapt the strategies and techniques to

each local situation. Each one added his or her own facilitation style and experience to contribute effectively to each specific group.

The exercises were adapted to the context, I mean, the psychosocial area and the communities. The innovations have depended also on the maturity and professional and personnel development of the facilitator, the context and the tools that are chosen and used by the group. Moreover, since the creation of the program, no specific contents have been formally included, to be applied by the facilitators using a unified language (Interview 1).

I found innovation in the way the three NLP practitioners transferred a mix of perspectives and perceptual and behavioral skills and tools to low-income groups, groups traditionally excluded from opportunities of personal self-improvement and motivation. Facilitators always affirmed that group exercises were adapted to the social context. As they recalled, originality depended on their professional and personal self-development, the understanding of the context of implementation and the tools chosen for the group dynamics, which they discussed and agreed upon in advance. Regularly scheduled assessments also allowed the inclusion of new contents when needed. A unified language among all the facilitators was a frequent recommendation, but not an important requirement, to fulfill the objectives of the citizenship education.

The NLP model (Dilts 1998; Requena 2006) attempted to guide the self-transformation of individuals. As seen during the initial workshop series through 2003, its implementation was based on a descending approach, initiating the discussion with the considerations about the surrounding environment, following with the interpretation of behavior, capacities, beliefs, identity and spirituality, in that order.

The design is based on the pyramid proposed by Dietlz (spirituality, identity, values and beliefs, abilities and capacities, behavior and conduct, and the environment). It is expected that changes occur from the top to the bottom of the pyramid. We work in the first four levels expecting to impact in the two last levels. The technical capability also contributes with the level of abilities and capacities. The spirituality is not based on religion but on the individual. What is my purpose?

Why am I here? These are key questions. The work focuses on the identity and the beliefs, which guarantees changes in the environment (Interview 2).

Facilitators based learning experience on the ascending levels of change stated by NLP, and adjusted according to their initial participatory assessment of the framework and its objectives. The content and their practical implementations were adjusted to each learning experience using selected tools and strategies, such as movies, didactic games, and the use of translators for indigenous participants, etc.

"An upholsterer with disability said to have been cured in three weeks". The level of instruction of participants does not allow introducing theory. NLP invites to have all our senses active. Stopping the future and passed thoughts, the thoughts of this instant emerge. I have also included Carlos and Margot Medina's notion of "Learning to be", and now I play movies in the workshops. The secret to do this is that it must be in Spanish and not in another language with subtitles, because of the reading problems in this type of group (Interview 2).

We could have a planned program. There is an objective that should be kept. The means, the strategy and the activities are flexible in relation to the group. Besides, I particularly can test how a strategy functions in order to see the reaction that it generates (Interview 2).

I also believe that when I work with many people in one workshop, I do not reach the audience, at least in absolute figures. The results go downhill. A number of participants should be no more than 20 to 25. 30 attendants are too many. With the indigenous people is also difficult because they use their language as a defense to avoid communicating with me. I have brought a translator and then I have found out that they all speak Spanish (interview 3).

PERSONAL CONDITIONS FOR INNOVATION

The changes to the strategies had depended on their maturity, individual style, personal development and community work experience, in a larger extent, because each one had his or her own style, which contributed to each specific group and community. These innovations were also tied to the conditions of the local context and the tools that were chosen and adapted to each group.

Two out of three facilitators included the notion of support group as an assisted healing process “*with the hope to generate processes of transformation... to arrive at agreements and principles together*”. One gave a more detailed description of the elements that she has introduced. She has introduced “*God in some cases, not from a religion perspective but as a force that guides us beyond the conscience*”, “*Miracles, using messages and motivating phrases*” or “*Unit Perception*” or “*State of Alert*” to illustrate the perception of all what is perceptible at the same time without effort and without expectations. Despite the brief description provided by this facilitator, no further discussion on the results of these innovations, more than testimonies that proved change, was possible.

GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Despite the effort, this approach proved to be inconvenient to achieve desired changes at the community level but valuable to plant the seeds for change at the individual level. Facilitators expected that an initial participatory community assessment, carried out to confront and change the environment, would stimulate people’s participation in collective issues. Such change, located at the bottom of Dielt’s pyramid (Figure 7 in page 189), was promoted prior to individual self-assessments and judgment of values, beliefs and identities. This outcome materialized only once with the assistance of facilitators as part of the learning experience, but the motivation did not succeed afterward when the program was not present. Nevertheless, the failure to visualize self-determination indicated the need to sustain the strategies, to confront issues affecting the collective lives of individuals in their own communities, and to enhance personal or individual acceptance, motivation, and decision-making.

It meant that if people were not confronted with the perceptions of themselves, their family groups, and their communities, and have not reflected on the importance of

their role in these three dimensions, most of the efforts to carry out community-oriented strategies might fail over time. Based on the discussion, facilitators adjusted the content and their practical implementation to each learning experience, that is to say, to each group. The three facilitators agreed on the significance of planning the community learning strategy in a different way and to adapt their content and strategy to each group, according to an initial group self-assessment. This educational strategy followed a shared structure. In this way, the most adequate tools and strategies for each learning experience were used.

Well, yes; we should always have a structured base, but according to the initial group self-assessment, we found that this or other necessary content should be adapted to the group by using the most adequate tools and strategies for each learning experience (interview 1).

We should have a program guide, but the facilitator should have the capacity to adapt the content of the program to each particular group, not to each community; because in a same community, each group is different. When the session already has four hours, the group begins to adopt its own personality as group. That is one of the reasons why I generally do not accept that new participants begin in the second workshop...(interview 3).

FACILITATOR'S PERSONAL LEARNING

According to the three interviews, the professionals in charge of the educational program also benefited and learned from the interaction and dialogue with the communities. They qualified their involvement in the implementation of the citizenship education strategy as satisfactory; supporting the argument that the knowledge they transferred to the beneficiaries also benefited them, as any other member of society who reflects on his or her life at the same time others go through the same process.

Consequently, the implementation proved to be a retrofitting process of mutual learning. Facilitators—*trainers*—and community members—*trainees*—identified with each other positively, which eventually facilitated and opened up a friendly window to

dialogue. This interaction also lead to eventual adjustments of methodologies and techniques used, and, according to people's own experience and testimonies, to strengthen capacities and identities in this singular social group environment, that is to say, low-income communities, by means other than education, training, business, or therapy in which NLP has been usually employed.

One facilitator affirmed to have strengthened his managment of groups, and his interpretation of "abundance and forgiveness". The second professional acknowledged "abundance and prosperity" as her personal achievements. The third interviewee confirmed the *capacity that communities have to be their own agents of change, individual as well as collective*—reflecting on his recent and previous work experience. He considered himself more knowledgeable, a condition that, according to him, had strengthened his capacity in this type of work.

ROLE OF FACILITATOR CONTRIBUTING TO CHANGE

Facilitators responded positively. The three professionals attempted to generate change in the way participants identify and reflect on their attitudes and beliefs. That was their main role. They also affirmed that they had played an active role or had collaborated towards the success of this objective to the extent of their capabilities.

Yes, it is an active role. In the interaction of the facilitator with the group, there are changes in both parts. This always occurs (interview 2).

Definitely, yes; first, because of the immediate results of each workshop. Then, later, I have found people who have said to me that they have experienced changes at home, with the family, or in their businesses...(interview 3).

Table 27: Facilitator's responses. Comparative table.

Guidelines	Interview 1 (M)	Interview 2 (F)	Interview 3 (M)
1. Use of learning approach	Rapid dynamic learning, the NLP psychology and the dynamic of groups.	The NLP pyramid. Changes from the top-bottom. Focus on beliefs and identity.	Undertake what values, belief and proper conduct are. NLP as a tool that seeks change.
2. Innovations to NLP	Introduce personal innovation and style to the context.	Introduce support groups, climate of confidence and rapport. God as strength.	More practice than theory, the capacity to change at the moment, and the support group.
3. Conditions for innovation	Maturity and personal development of the facilitator, selection of tools.	Promote the encounter and reflection.	Previous experience in the community. Capacity to adapt contents to each group.
4. Conditions for implementation	Contents should be adapted to the group (tools, strategies, learning experience)	Strategies and activities should be flexible in relation to the group.	Capacity to adapt contents to each group.
5. Facilitator's personal learning	The management of groups, teamwork, abundance, forgiveness and love. The importance of the program	Reflection on abundance and prosperity. The one who teaches also learns.	To confirm the capacity of communities One should facilitate and not become the know-it-all.
6. Role contributing to change	Perceived changes	Active role	Contributed to change
7. Values	Responsibility, abundance, tolerance, team work, communication.	Responsibility, confidence, success, satisfaction, not to have limits.	Respect, solidarity, confidence, individual and community work.
8. Benefits achieved	Success in the relationship with myself, the family and the community.	Improved relationship with family and themselves.	Changes in the household, the family and the work place.
9. Perception of changes	Have noticed changes	Have noticed changes	Have noticed changes
10. Barriers, beliefs and attitudes that affect change	Consciousness and beliefs tied to poverty and scarcity, illness and death, suffering and irresponsibility with life.	The level of instruction, reading problems, lack of responsibility and lack of commitment of participants.	The level of instruction, the belief that they are not capable, the political context, religious values, the attitude of leaders, and the language.
11. Perception of the program team	Processes have been satisfactory. Recommends revising the educational program.	Not enough confidence to say things openly. Monitoring and leadership should be strengthened.	Need more training and more attention to social change.

Source: 2006 Interviews to facilitators. M (Male), F (Female).

VALUES THAT GUIDED THE IMPLEMENTATION

The local experience was noteworthy in its unique way of handling a group, stimulating group work during the sessions, and recognizing abundance, forgiveness and self-esteem, among other values. These achievements prevailed and were encouraged in order to promote citizenship education at the local level and, consequently, to contribute to accomplishing the set goals of development. Furthermore, facilitators pointed out that beneficiaries were able to reflect on the importance of being responsible, the recognition of citizenship, tolerance, respect, communication and teamwork, as values that needed further attention in these communities. In this regard, one facilitator pointed out the strategy he used (Table 27 shows a list of values that the facilitators pointed out):

I guide them to strengthen these principles using NLP so that they keep them in their minds. In the first workshop, we encourage them to express their values; using one question to identify the values a person may need. They confuse a value with a conduct, a belief or a feeling. As long as they express them, I guide them and establish the difference. It is an open discussion.

BENEFITS ACHIEVED BY PARTICIPANTS DURING WORKSHOPS

Despite not being successful in transposing itself to achieve collective action, important evidence confirmed potential individual changes that could be perceived or communicated in assessment workshops and individual interviews. According to facilitators, beneficiaries were able to express and recognize implicit values in the citizenship education. Such an impact of the facilitated exercise of self-reflection and action was summarized in its effectiveness and success on the following associations:

1. The relationship with myself (the individual level),
2. The relationship with my family -partner, sons and daughters, parents, other relatives- (the household level),

3. The relationship with my neighbors, my community and my society (the community level).

Definitely, yes; first, because of the immediate results of each workshop. Then, later, I have found people who have said to me that they have experienced changes at home, with the family, or in their businesses. It seems that they have managed to expand the business, have more incomes, and have a better relationship with the husband or wife and the children. At the beginning of the workshop, the first day of work, I perceive a kind of behavior. At the end, I see how people approach each other, and how they articulate the speech and the intonation, in a more relaxed way. Already in the third session they say that they experience changes of attitude toward their children. At the end of each session I use some thirty minutes to do an evaluation and, at the end of the cycle, they reflect on some changes and share them with the group (Interview 3).

PERCEPTION OF CHANGES IN ATTITUDE OF PARTICIPANTS

Facilitators expressed to have witnessed, from the teaching-reflection-action responses of participants, a high number of changes in many aspects and contexts of people's life. As they recalled, this event confirmed that participants improved their lives in many forms. The introductory content, based on building rapport and empathy within the group, was necessary to achieve better communication and responsiveness. Subsequently, this assumption was validated in the responses of beneficiaries during formal interviews conducted after accomplishing citizenship education and their individual housing improvement projects. At this point, the condition of subjectivity made it difficult to recognize the changes in a statistical way using the responses of the facilitators. Hence, the facilitators' own experiences and testimonies became elements of validation.

BARRIERS, BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES THAT AFFECT CHANGE

During the training and reflection process, participants identified and discussed their people's barriers, beliefs and attitudes that affected achieving personal

transformation. These conversations pointed to issues such as the low level of instruction, the lack of communication among neighbors, the lack of confidence, or the difficulty to arrive at consensus, poverty and scarcity, illness, death, pain and suffering, fault, and irresponsibility dealing with life, among others. The three facilitators were aware of the same limitations and were able to identify these attitudes among the groups, based on their previous experience.

The conscience and the beliefs tied to poverty and scarcity, the illness, the death, the pain and the suffering, the fault, and the irresponsibility of what happens to me in my life (interview 1).

There is not enough confidence and opening to say the things in public; what they feel, what they think. There are changes, but the conversation in the workshops is sideways, that is to say, with the one I have to my side. We should deepen the monitoring and the leadership (interview 2).

The most important barrier is the beliefs that "I am not able to", or "I come so that they help me because I am incapacitated". It is the belief of being incapable of accomplishing change. The second barrier is the political context, although it is small. In addition, there is the religion in some cases, but it happens. For example, in the evangelical church there are many ideological branches. If the leader is a closed mind person, the follower arrives with that same barrier. But I have been able to get them realize that the problem is not the workshop but the attitude of their leader (interview 3).

NLP became an efficient tool for stimulating changes of beliefs and promoting success and personal excellence in low-income people, by adopting the behaviors, language, strategies and beliefs of another or understanding the pattern of one's own behaviors in order to model aspects of oneself. Nevertheless, beyond the individual and household levels, the effectiveness of the educational strategy was not sufficiently effective to reach changes in people's attitudes and motivation in order to confront and interact in solving community related issues. In this regard, facilitators described and confronted their perceptions with the NLP structure of change and concluded an interpretation of the pyramid (Figure 13).

According to their conclusions, facilitators used NLP as a way to empower people, with the expectation that this self-development would generate an opportunity for community action. Nevertheless, beneficiaries perceived household needs, tied to daily life constraints, as more important. Moreover, people had the propensity to use the program as an opportunity to benefit from the national government and its national resources.

People tended to respond to the training requirement as a bridge to obtain an “aid” that had been offered for the community and “for the people” (*para el pueblo*, as Chavez usually states). Facilitators also added that, despite this generalized perception, the citizenship education was able to accomplish individual transformation, but failed to prove successful in addressing group issues in the community. The presumption that “other or others” will take care of “the local problems” was still present. Involvement meant getting into politics and confronting political interests and groups. In this sense, the facilitators concluded that the housing improvements promoted some community action, but the program mainly coordinated it. They added that local people were more aware and capable of recognizing the issues that affected their communities and the services they needed and demanded and were willing to contribute to their solution if it meant some benefit.

FACILITATORS’ PERCEPTION OF THE PROGRAM TEAM.

As a main recommendation, facilitator one suggested *to conduct an assessment of the program in all its aspects, which had already been initiated with positive results. The task would help to establish a well-defined organizational structure in the SAMI, including processes and tasks, among others issues, that concerned the team of Ciudadanía Plena*. He affirmed that “NLP is an efficient tool for the transformation of beliefs and for success and personal excellence”, and concluded that “the processes have

been satisfactory". Nevertheless, he recommended that the team should "*maintain the monitoring of the solidarity group process and the economic and social outcomes once the psychosocial phase and the delivery of micro-credits have ended*". He also criticized the strategies used "*for the compliance of payment agreement and the management and reduction of debts*", but did not indicate in what terms.

From his experience facilitating teamwork assessments, facilitator two perceived that there was not "*enough confidence to say things in public; what they felt and thought*" and recommended to "*deepen monitoring and leadership*" among the group and in the communities. He also affirmed that, within the municipal institution, the local agents of change (economic advisors) have tended to work as if SAMI needed to "*comply with a financial objective*", despite the effort to promote the same principles of citizenship in this group. In this regard, facilitator three pointed out that these advisors had "*not been trained as social workers*", which made them "*focus on the economic aspect but not on the social change*". In that way, the program did not perform its function efficiently enough. Consequently, strengthening that part has been their continuous work.

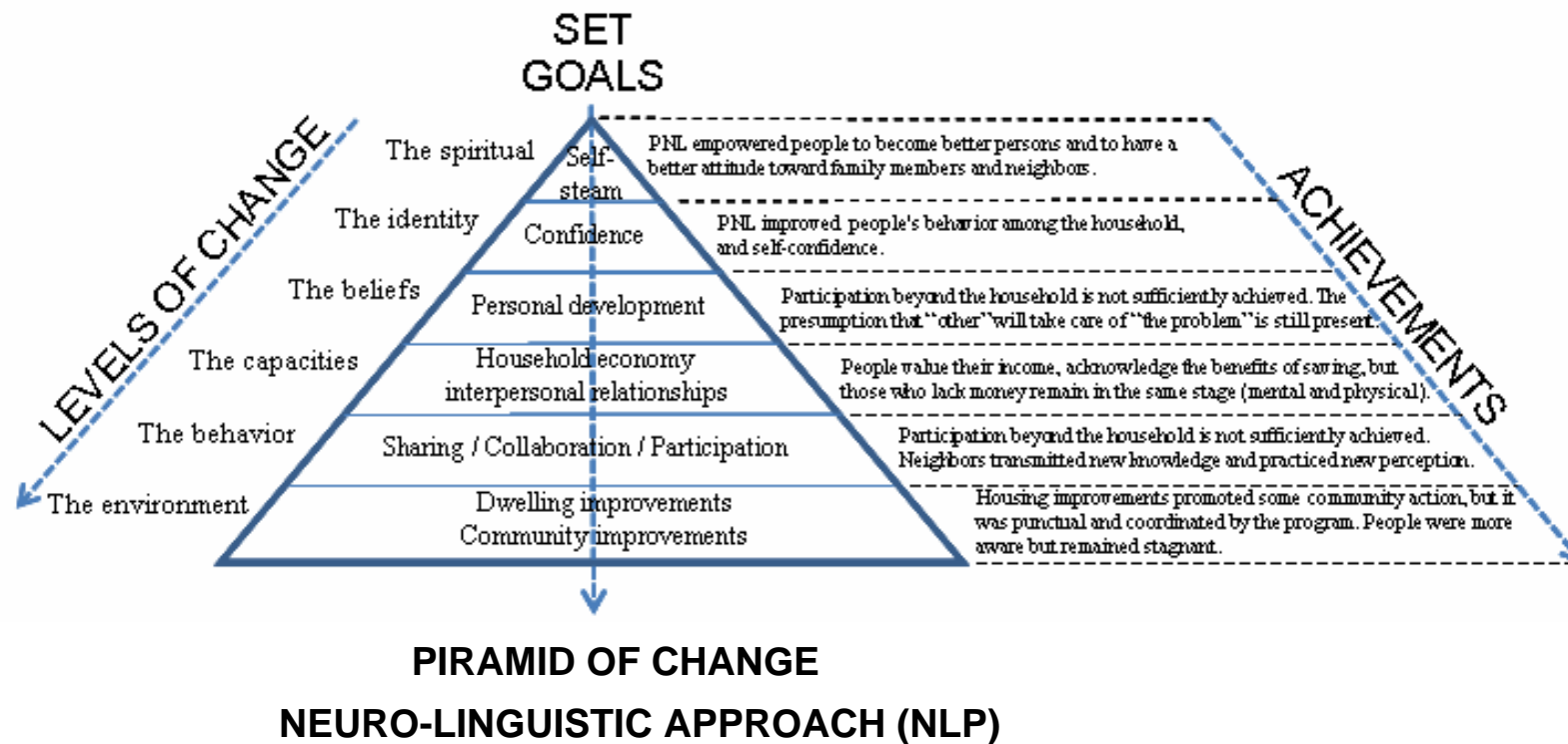


Figure 16: Interpretation of individual changes according to facilitators.

Source: 2006 Interviews to facilitators (Adapted from Dilts 1998).

BENEFICIARIES' SELF-REFLECTION AND ACTION AS A FACTOR OF DEVELOPMENT.

In 2006, I conducted post-test interviews with thirty-nine (39) individuals who participated and successfully completed the citizenship and technical education, and were able to materialize some type of physical improvement in their dwellings with the use of the program's financing scheme. This sample group represented the 14.5% of the initial group of beneficiaries (269 applicants) in 2002 and the 29% of the group that was financed in 2003 and 2004 (137 beneficiaries in the four communities).

Table 28: Sample group (2006).

Community	Solicitors (2002)	Beneficiaries (2003-2004)	Sample (2006)
Barrio Angélica de Lusinchí	35	17	5 (29.4%)
Barrio 23 de Marzo	74	45	14 (31.1%)
Barrio Miraflores	141	51	15 (29.5%)
Barrio Rómulo Gallegos	46	17	5 (29.4%)
Total	296	130	39 (30.0%)

I selected interviewees randomly from the registry of beneficiaries of the housing improvement component in each of the four barrios. The data was provided by SAMI. At that moment, people identified me as a contributor from the university and the HABITAT-LUZ foundation. In this sense, I always explained to them that the conversation and the questions that I needed to ask were part of a research project and had neither implication nor connection with the administration of the program. Every person that I approached agreed to respond my questions. Their friendly and sincere

responses afterward contributed to the interpretation of the impact of the development strategy on the beneficiaries of the housing sub-program. The responses were organized and interpreted according to four main topics: association with the development program, recognition of outcomes, recognition of changes and consequences on community participation.

ASSOCIATION WITH THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Most of the interviewees expressed the meaning of their participation in the program by relating it to their personal achievement. These achievements included the recognition and acceptance of the meaning and the importance of being better citizens, the acquisition and practice of individual and group responsibility, the acknowledgment of new opportunities for improving the quality of life of the household, and the improvement of the relationship with other members of the community. Beneficiaries quoted:

For me, *we have been happy* because I have received many personal things. *It helps a lot to grow physically, morally and spiritually* in order to improve a lot because they offer education to be better citizens.

For me, *it has gone well*. The community has improved because *all the people that participated have benefited*.

For other beneficiaries, participating in the program was also synonymous of benefit, although they argued that the benefit could have been greater if the participation had been on an individual basis, without sharing responsibilities with other neighbors. This conclusion contradicted a basic development principle implicit in the program philosophy, which promotes the integration of different stakeholders with a common interest or goal. I recorded this concern in these terms:

It is very good for us, what happens is that since the group works a cooperative of four people, at times one does not behave well. *If it were in an individual basis, I would do better.* It's a good support.

Table 29: What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

(Frequency of responses) *		
Personal benefit	15	17.9%
Personal learning experience	9	10.7%
Opportunity to get to know more people	9	10.7%
It was a Group effort	9	10.7%
Housing improvement	9	10.7%
Some people did not pay	6	7.1%
Responsibility	5	6.0%
Collaboration and sharing	5	4.8%
Incentive to save	4	4.8%
Benefits for the community	3	3.6%
Citizenship education	3	3.6%
Gaining confidence	2	2.4%
The credit was not enough	3	3.6%
Improving community relationships	2	2.4%
Does not remember	1	1.2%
	84	100%

* Total number of times each assumption was mentioned.

The interpretation of these responses suggests that 88% of the topics considered as important outcomes were associated to a general feeling of satisfaction with the citizenship education and the workshop experience. The remaining 12% were not completely satisfied with their accomplishments or did not state any judgment about it, either positive or negative. People pointed out suggestions in order to improve some of the content of the workshops and to assure the continuity of the educational program for

the benefit of other members of their communities. For them, *Ciudadanía Plena* symbolized empowerment to identify and set goals for individual and group development. It helped bring people together and meet each other in a space for dialogue and to share good and bad aspects of their daily living. The program represented education in citizenship values, motivation for saving, and planning for the household, a kind of personal development unavailable to the group before, quoted by beneficiaries in the following terms:

I think that up to now I liked the workshops. They seemed well to me. *I learned a lot how to relate with other people, with the neighbors.* It has encouraged me to save because I had many expenses in the life that did not bring me any benefit.

That was where we did the workshops on how to save, on how to relate with my neighbors... because I did not know my neighbors' names or how to call them. My family says that *I have changed* like fifty percent because I was not like this before. Before, I was more serious. I did not use to visit anyone but *now I walk back and forth.* I feel that I have changed a lot with this project.

Three years after the beginning of the implementation phase in 2003, beneficiaries were not able to clearly recognize or give credit to the partner institutions that had a permanent presence in their areas. The interest of the program was, at all times, to inform citizens of the cooperative nature of the initiative and the unbiased presence of non-governmental institutions. The barrios already recognized the long history of the local cooperation of the NGOs. Local people openly accepted the local university as a responsible stakeholder, which oriented its work toward academic and development goals.

The incorporation of beneficiaries from the beginning was an attempt to build people's confidence and identification with the development project⁵¹. The research drew

⁵¹ In theory, this argument has been strongly promoted to ensure continuance (ie. Narayan 1995).

a significant conclusion. The recognition of the partner institutions was critical in promoting and reaching empowerment in the barrios. The NGOs advocated this and their presence during the implementation phase was important in keeping the unbiased perspective of this development program, which involved governmental and non-governmental actors. As seen in Ciudadanía Plena, the HABITAT-LUZ foundation and N.A. Cesap followed a dialogue approach in order to interact with community leaders, who understood the objectivity behind the program and the responsibility of these organizations to preserve its continuity. As a result, leaders assumed the commitment to integrating the group of beneficiaries to enhance transparency and accountability (also stated by Creeddy and Zuidema 2007). The program did the same in every meeting: introductory meetings, citizenship and construction workshops, local group assessments, individual follow-up visits, which I positively observed.

A way to explore whether or not the beneficiaries validated such statements was to ask them to identify the partner institutions. As a result, 33.3% declared not to remember or to identify any institution associated with the program or contributing to it. The same number (33.3%) was able to recall only one and no more than two of the institutions (23.1%). The group acknowledged a high presence of the municipality (28.2%) in their areas but gave minimum recognition of the HABITAT-LUZ foundation (5.1% each), which effectively contributed to the technical solutions of their housing needs. Only 5.1% of the sample was capable of identifying all institutional actors physically present in their barrios (the municipality, the NGOs and the local university).

The only international actor, the Urban Management Program for Latin America and the Caribbean (UMP-LAC), was not recalled in any response, while the local bank that offered the savings account privileges appeared in one response. Despite it being always mentioned as a member of the consortium, the international institution did not

have a local representative in the city and did not attend any community meetings during the implementation phase. Its participation was more symbolic than practical, mainly seen as a support during the negotiation decision-making and signing of the program agreement but was never identified by the beneficiaries as necessary to obtain the credit.

Table 30: Association of identified actors.

Sample group *			
Municipality	11	28.2%	1 actor
Municipality + University	5	12.8%	2 actors
Municipality + HABITAT-LUZ	3	7.7%	2 actors
HABITAT-LUZ	2	5.1%	1 actor
Municipality + HABITAT -LUZ + University + NA Cesap	2	5.1%	4 actors
Municipality + HABITAT-LUZ + University	1	2.6%	3 actors
Municipality + Communities	1	2.6%	2 actors
Municipality + University + Local Bank	1	2.6%	3 actors
None	13	33.3%	None
	39	100%	

* Responses by number of beneficiaries in the sample.

The frequency of responses indicated that the most identified actor was the municipality, which effectively had a constant presence during the project cycle, with 40.7%. This was followed by the University and the HABITAT-LUZ foundation, with 28.8%. Other stakeholders, including the communities, were minimally identified with the program.

Table 31: What institutions do you associate with the program?

(Frequency of responses)*		
The Municipality	24	40.7%
None	14	23.7%
The Local University (LUZ)	10	16.9%
HABITAT-LUZ Foundation	7	11.9%
N.A. Cesap Foundation	2	3.4%
BOD (Bank, saving accounts)	1	1.7%
The communities	1	1.7%
	59	100%

* Total number of times each actor was stated.

RECOGNITION OF OUTCOMES AND CHANGES

Four characteristics that can guarantee that participation contributes to social change are increasing people's access to information, their inclusion in decision-making, local organizational capacity and governing structures and accountability of institutions to the public (World Bank, WHO Europe 2006, Pretty et al 1995). In this sense, the program exhibited two of these characteristics through the interaction with the architects, and the beneficiaries' participation in the decision-making of what project was the best investment.

With the belief that people's actions can produce results—considered an empowerment goal—the visit of an architect, who facilitated the design and decision-making of the best solution to each household need was also a positive investment and effort. Moreover, citizenship education promoted peoples' self-development while training in construction allowed them to take more control of the financing and materialization of the improvement project.

71.8% of the interviewees recognized that they had materialized some type of physical improvement in their dwellings with the financial and technical assistance provided by the development program. People pointed out that this achievement had been reflected in the application of the knowledge learned in the technical workshops during the construction process. The group applied this new kind of knowledge in the supervision of the quality of their constructions (use of appropriate materials and construction techniques, proper quantities, time of execution), in the preservation of the spatial attributes of the house that was discussed and agreed upon with the architect (room layouts, minimum space requirements, spatial relations, etc.), and in administering household income and savings. The same people who stated positive outcomes also associated the contribution of the program to their personal wellbeing, their confidence and their strengthening of citizenship values. In this sense, one beneficiary pointed out:

Yes, I benefited a lot, they lent me to add the bathroom, but since they did not continue lending me money for that difficulty when the others stopped paying back...bad. But I continued as if I were saving my money and paying my installments. In fact, I saved more and I enlarged the kitchen, I added a room, I continued with everything and without a loan. I learned to save, to maintain the savings because they opened a savings account for me.

The rest of the sample group (28.2%) perceived slight or no tangible progress in relation to their previous condition, mainly due to the small amount of money invested, which they considered insufficient to accomplish their improvements after the construction was initiated or the use of the loan to solve other immediate household needs such as health problems, personal debts or business investments with the expectation of rapid return and profit. Examples of comments that demonstrated these concerns stated:

No. I spent the money that same day... because I had a son that was sick. The house needs lots of repairs and we need to spend a lot on it... but we had an accident.

It was an aid. What they gave us was not a lot but it was a beginning. The house was raised, but it lacked the ceiling. Then with the credit what we built was the roof of the two bedrooms, the porch and the living. We could not build the roofing in the kitchen.

Table 32: Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Sample group		
Yes	28	71.8%
No	6	15.4%
Yes, but not enough	5	12.8%
	39	100%

Source: 2006 interviews.

Few individuals disagreed with the return of their credits as a general policy, arguing that the program was sponsored by the municipality, and its mayor, who openly followed President Chavez's proselytism. This argument, difficult to validate at this point in the research, but perceivable in the general opinion, was the result of an irreversible correlation between the project and the main sponsor and implementer: the municipality, which, in the name of a "paternalistic" and "rich" national government, had to provide the poor with the solution to their problems with no obligation to return. Inevitably, Ciudadanía Plena was associated with other State-funded local programs, mainly the *Missions*⁵², in which the social benefits were more important than financial sustainability.

Most of the official programs in the country were criticized as being tied to a paternalistic and State-subsidized ideology promoted by the central government. In this sense, the return of the loan was seen as a condition that was not imposed in other

⁵² A complete list is available online at: <http://www.gobiernoonlinea.ve/miscelaneas/misiones.html>

programs. Individuals whose conduct responded to this general assumption stopped paying back their loans after their second or third installment. As a consequence of their fault, the administration of the program classified them as “bad clients”. This condition had a negative effect on the financial sustainability of the fund. This decision usually caused a negative effect on the rest of the members of these groups, who saw their future opportunities limited, because they were asked to pay a portion of the debtor’s loan in order to qualify for a subsequent credit. In practice, this policy was not applied out of consideration for those people who responsibly received their loans and paid them on time, despite the financial limitations they had expressed.

In regard to the accomplishment of tangible changes for their families and communities, when the heads of households were asked to express their opinion about the implications of their projects in their quality of life, most of them externalized positive and satisfactory consequences, summarizing 83.7% valid statements, according to Table 30. People associated changes to the following outcomes from high to low frequency of response: personal development, reaching more support, strengthening family ties and confidence, saving, better living spaces, improved social relations, communication, and desire of benefits for the community.

The identification of these values set the basis of citizenship in the group as an effective outcome of the education process of Ciudadania Plena, and confirmed that the themes covered in the workshop series reached the audience and certainly motivated change. Despite the financial support and expert follow-up, 12.7% of the sample group were not capable of materializing any improvement or benefits for their families for distinct reasons.

When beneficiaries were asked if they had experienced a change of attitude toward their family and neighbors after their participation in the program, a significant

36% (seen in Table 34) expressed that they had experienced a negative change of attitude or had not improved their relationships. This was mainly due to the unconstructive behavior of their neighbors, who did not recognize the benefits of other members of their community. These respondents pointed to envy and lack of unity as main causes.

On the other hand, 62% of the interviewees affirmed to have experienced positive changes of attitude towards their relatives and neighbors, highlighting values such as responsibility, solidarity, communication, awareness and mutual support among group members. Change was perceived as possible and as a consequence of people's own actions.

They also valued the financial assistance and the benefits that they perceived in their quality of life after the completion of the project. This positive attitude was difficult to perceive at the beginning of the implementation phase when people usually stated their dissatisfaction with the program's delay. The assumption that progress was feasible, real and reachable was better accepted when credit finally landed in the barrios and additions and repairs to dwellings were materialized, as people quoted:

Yes. My older son says that he was ashamed to invite his friends to come over, because his bedroom was not as he wanted. But now the house changed. We have also improved in that aspect.

I feel satisfaction. I did not believe it because I did not expect that these things were possible. From that, I have had more self-confidence in these things.

Despite the success that I witnessed in a high number of improvement projects, when I asked beneficiaries about their willingness to apply for a subsequent credit as a means to continue in the program, 18% of respondents acknowledged that they did not want to do it due to personal or economic reasons, which represented a constraint on their household at that moment (Table 35). The compromise and responsibility to pay their

debts caused some skepticism and uncertainty when people were invited to apply for an additional credit. Instead of criticizing the program, which was not their intention, they stated that the lack of sufficient family income had placed a lot of pressure when attending other household needs that were more important to them.

Table 33: Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

General Interpretation * (frequency of responses)			
YES.	There is personal development	12	21,8%
YES.	There is more training	7	12,7%
NOT.	<i>There is no change</i>	7	12,7%
YES.	There is more support	5	9,1%
YES.	There is more family support	4	7,3%
YES.	There is more confidence	4	7,3%
YES.	There is saving	3	5,5%
YES.	There is change	3	5,5%
YES.	There are independent areas in the house	3	5,5%
YES.	There is better relationship among neighbors	2	3,6%
	<i>Minimum change</i>	2	3,6%
YES.	It is useful	1	1,8%
YES.	There is more communication in the household	1	1,8%
YES.	Improvements for the community	1	1,8%
		55	100%

* Total number of times each assumption was stated.

Table 34: Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Sample group		
Positive change of attitude	24	61.5%
Negative change of attitude	14	35.9%
Did not respond	1	2.6%
	39	100%

Positive Interpretation (frequency of responses)		
Maintained Positive Relationships	9	19.1%
Changed, but did not specify	7	14.9%
Changed attitude toward the family	6	12.8%
Maintained Positive Attitude	6	12.8%
Changed Attitude	4	8.5%
Only collaborate	3	6.4%
Changed attitude toward the community	2	4.3%
Have more strength	2	4.3%
Apply what have learnt	1	2.1%
Have more communication	1	2.1%
	41	87,2%

Negative Interpretation (frequency of responses)		
Relationships have not improved	5	10.6%
Have not changed, but did not specify	1	2.1%
	6	12,7%

The household responsibilities and the apprehension with which people lived in the four barrios had obliged them to put aside the responsibility assumed with the credit and the construction improvement projects. Nevertheless and despite all the difficulties, more than 80% ratified their willingness to continue benefiting from the program. Only a few effectively contacted the institution to apply for a new credit and most of them did not make any attempt, expecting the visit of the economic advisor in their own homes.

Table 35: Would you like to continue participating in the program?

Sample group					
Si	32	82.1%			
No	7	17.9%			
	39	100%			

Positive Interpretation * (frequency of responses)			Negative Interpretation * (frequency of responses)		
To improve the dwelling	23	51.1%	Has not finish paying back	3	6.7%
To learn more in the workshops	4	8.9%	Has no financial capacity	2	4.4%
To achieve the goals	4	8.9%	Has other expenditures	2	4.4%
To help the family	1	2.2%	No more workshops	1	2.2%
It is easy to pay and the interest rate is low	1	2.2%	Because of age	1	2.2%
To receive a help	1	2.2%	Has other credit options	1	2.2%
To improve	1	2.2%		10	22.2%
	35	77.8%			

* Total number of times each assumption was stated.

Those who agreed to continue benefiting from the program stated that they valued the physical and aesthetic improvements of their dwellings, helping out with the requirements as a group, attending the workshops, and assuming the responsibility for paying back. This same group showed high interest in continuing the progressive improvement of their dwellings, either construction or functional, in addition to following up on the credit program and the citizenship education as a means to achieve it and other household goals.

CONSEQUENCES OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Ciudadania Plena was able to motivate people's concern in environmental and community issues, especially during the technical workshops. In these opportunities people had the enthusiasm to discuss and evaluate the environmental condition of their surroundings and were guided to conduct a simple environmental assessment. Nevertheless, after the training process concluded and participants returned to their daily lives, participation beyond the household level was not observed. Beneficiaries identified personal achievements such as better administration of the household income and the understanding of the significance of saving, but also reflected on their individual experiences participating in solidarity groups, a first attempt of the program to stimulate participation in small groups, as being neither positive nor productive.

Comments in towards this issue tended to have a negative implication, usually tied to the lack of compromise with the credit, the lack of effective communication among co-debtors, the generalized distrust based on meager previous relationships, and the individualistic conduct of many participants. In this regard, a portion of the group considered that the benefit would have been greater if the participation was on an individual basis and not in groups, as was required by the program. Identified causes of this attitude were the lack of responsibility in sharing the benefits and the difficulties of holding those who did not pay their loans⁵³ accountable for their failure, along with the general apathy of residents and the pessimism of some members to visualize and seek a better quality of life. In this regard, one person recalled the following:

What I do not like about these credits is that one has to be with three or four people, right now I am going to be with G. because the other delayed a lot. I, myself, went to speak with him because what he owed was only seventy thousand Bolivars [less than 35 US\$] and for that reason we have delayed. And he told me

⁵³ At the end of 2004, according to Sami, 17% of beneficiaries of the housing improvement sub program had failed paying back their monthly installments.

that that was a pittance. I told him that because of those seventy thousand we could not continue with another credit. He thought that since it was not a lot it was not important, after a meeting held in the sport court he paid.

Table 36: What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Positive Interpretation * (frequency of responses)			Negative Interpretation * (frequency of responses)		
We preserve the friendship	8	12.9%	They stopped paying	14	22.6%
We paid back	6	9.7%	There was distrust	8	12.9%
We communicate with each other	2	3.2%	There was individualism	5	8.1%
There was solidarity	2	3.2%	People should know each other previously	3	4.8%
Sharing	1	1.6%	Did not communicate afterwards	3	4.8%
We had confidence	1	1.6%	There was no communication among members	3	4.8%
It was an opportunity to know each other	1	1.6%	There was no compromise	2	3.2%
We have to adapt	1	1.6%	Minimum responsibility	1	1.6%
			Unemployment affects	1	1.6%
	22	35.5%		40	64.5%

* Total number of times each assumption was stated.

Ciudadanía Plena was not able to impact or motivate the participation of the group in community affairs, despite the fact that this expected outcome was highly promoted during the entire process. To assess these implications, responses were grouped following the same criteria used in the analysis of the 2002 survey. Results pointed out that a relatively high number of beneficiaries in the sample (64.1% in Table 37) were not involved in participatory endeavors at the time the program conducted the survey. Moreover, from the same group, 46.2% had not participated in any community group or participatory experience before and remained in the same condition after attending the

citizenship education and receiving the financial aid. 28% responded affirmatively while a small number, accounting for 7.7%, confirmed that they had ceased their cooperative efforts in their communities, mainly caused by disagreements with the government institutions, their age or household responsibilities.

Table 37: What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Sample group		
Positive attitude	25	61.0%
Negative Attitude	14	34.1%
Did not respond	2	4.9%
	41	100%

Positive Interpretation * (frequency of responses)		
Communication	12	23.1%
Existing friendship	9	17.3%
Support	4	7.7%
Willingness to pay	2	3.8%
Good relationship	1	1.9%
Responsibility	1	1.9%
	29	55.8%

Negative Interpretation * (frequency of responses)		
Members stopped paying	7	13.5%
Lack of responsibility	5	9.6%
Lack of communication	4	7.7%
Lack of interest	3	5.8%
Personal problems	3	5.8%
Pessimism	1	1.9%
	23	44.2%

* Total number of times each assumption was stated.

In this regard, the same reasons that prevailed before implementation remained four years later. Despite a positive change in attitude measured at the household level and toward immediate neighbors, the impact on a broader scope of participation was not positively felt by this group. People pointed out their generalized attitude toward participation was that it was important, but the belief that participation symbolized the

use of spare time remained high for those who did not participate, even though this negative assumption slightly decreased from 48% in 2002 to 44% in 2006.

Yes, *I have been motivated*. Some people came to the barrio to evaluate the dwellings that needed the assistance of the Ministry of Housing and Habitat and I offered to help the coordinator in a census. *I could do it in my spare time*.

Yes, it is very important, as they say: when we have a majority, there is more determination. In the unity we find the strength.

Sometimes one does not have the time. I say it because I have experience, going without breakfast, using our own money, losing the day of work. There are others that are less busy. We have to give the task to the young people.

Well, because in reality, I do not have the time.

Table 38: Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Sample group		
No	25	64.1%
Yes	11	28.2%
Not now	3	7.7%
	39	100%

Table 39: If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Sample group		
No	21	53.8%
Already participates	10	25.6%
Yes	8	20.5%
	39	100%

It was clear that the regular barrio inhabitant was not willing to participate and the task was given to political community leaders. Despite this attitude, a contradictory finding showed that almost all the respondents were able to recognize the significance and relevance of community participation for distinct reasons. Moreover, a high number confirmed that the program positively contributed to this perception. People considered participation as important because it was a way to communicate their opinions and to be

informed, to solve their problems, to provide support and orientation to others, to achieve the commitment of the leaders and, in a small degree, to complain and protest when necessary.

Table 40: If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Positive Interpretation * (frequency of responses)		
Has never participated	18	46.2%
Was a member of the Neighbors Association	5	12.8%
Is a recent member of the Communal Council	5	12.8%
Collaborator of the Communal Council but not a member	3	7.7%
Political Activist	2	5.1%
Only attends meetings	1	2.6%
Participate in the Missions (State Funded)	1	2.6%
Was a member of the Neighbors Association and is a recent member of the Communal Council	1	2.6%
Participate in a Community Dining Room (State Funded)	1	2.6%
Works with a Religious Group	1	2.6%
Did not specify	1	2.6%
	39	100%

Table 41: If negative, can you explain why?

Negative Interpretation * (frequency of responses)		
Lack of time	15	44.1%
Lack of interest	6	17.6%
Bad reputation of the Communal Council	5	14.7%
It brings them problems	4	11.8%
Bad relationships	2	5.9%
Age	2	5.9%
	34	100%

* Total number of times each assumption was stated.

The general lack of interest was still present, accounting for 18% of the negative responses, and when compared to the 2002 data, neither negative nor positive change was identified in this misleading perception. At the same time, community participation was

discouraged by the bad reputation of the communal councils, by the assumption that participation represented the possibility of getting into trouble and, in a minor degree, by bad relations among inhabitants or health and age conditions. These conclusions were sensed in the responses:

Not yet. When the council was organized they did not appointed anybody else but them. They elected themselves. They are like fourteen. The made it up and reelected themselves.

Yes, I am willing to participate, but not in a Board of Directors of the Communal Council (*Junta Directiva del Consejo Comunal*).

The new council. Many people say that they received funding to build some new houses, but they also say that the one who manages it took the money. Do not trust me, that is what people say. I have not seen anything, true.

Yes, I can participate but there is a problem; the persons that were chosen have a lot of enthusiasm at the beginning but they slow down later because they say that they do not have time either. They invite me and I go even though I know I am not going to do much.

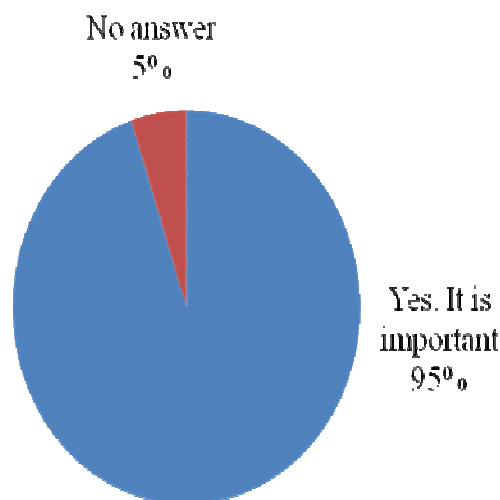


Figure 17: Do you think that community participation is important?

Table 42: Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community?

Sample group		
Yes	28	71.8%
No	9	23.1%
Do not know	2	5.1%
	39	100%

Positive Interpretation *		
Maintained the motivation	11	29.7%
Motivated the participation	10	27.0%
Motivated the communication	4	10.8%
Yes, but did not specify	3	8.1%
Motivated the collaboration	2	5.4%
	30	81.1%

Negative Interpretation *		
Only at the beginning of the program	4	10.8%
The Communal Council is the responsible	1	2.7%
Lack of time	1	2.7%
Frustration	1	2.7%
	7	18.9%

* Total number of times each assumption was stated.

I asked people to state the most important issues that affected their barrios at that moment in order to find out how this self-assessment could condition their attitude toward participation. In effect, people highlighted a series of tangible problems that needed immediate and direct attention. A general organization of issues following the total number of times each one was mentioned established people's priorities and concerns in these barrios (Figure 17). Once again, as it was perceived in 2002, a portrayal of their precarious living conditions in the four barrios pointed out the lack of a sewer system or its bad quality as the main problem, followed by the general insecurity and the lack of police enforcement, and the inadequate and irregular supply of potable water. Additionally, the polluted creeks (cañadas) and the constant floods that affect some

portions of these barrios also affected people's condition and quality of life. The street pavement, previously inexistent, but subsequently built, is now a days in bad condition, as well as is the inefficient garbage collection. Both problems remained at a second level of priority. At last, but also important; people demanded the improvement of the housing stock, the provision of domestic gas and health facilities and more attention from government institutions. Besides physical issues and tangible concerns that had mainly affected the barrios since their first land occupation and further consolidation, the lack of general participation and motivation toward that aim was not perceived as an immediate problem that required attention and promotion.

In fact, when people were asked to point out how they could contribute to the solution of these problems, 25.4% of the alternative forms of solutions promoted their active participation in distinct forms, while 18% of the arguments pointed to approaching the responsible institutions to find help to solve or prevent such problems. Despite protesting appearing in a lesser degree, the promotion of values such as collaboration, respect and unity were also encouraged (see Table 43).

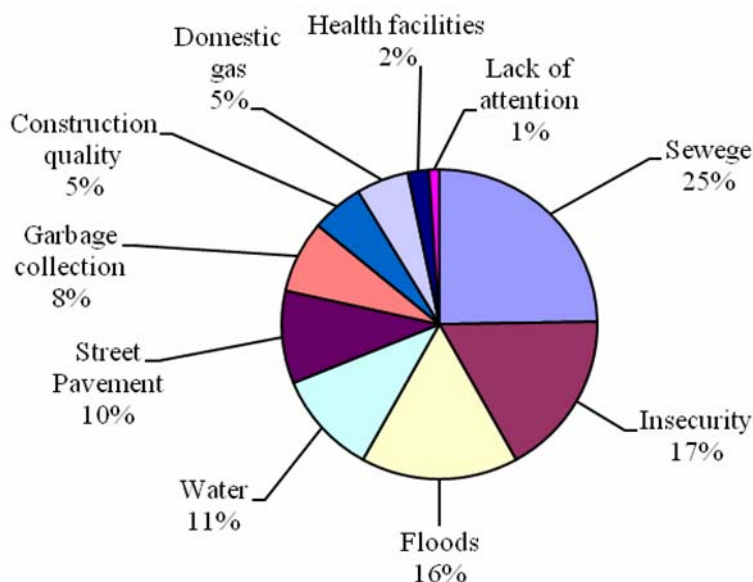


Figure 18: Problem solving priorities according to beneficiaries.

Table 43: What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

I would approach the responsible agency	13	18.1%
I would participate in meetings	11	15.3%
I would motivate others	5	6.9%
I would participate in the Communal Council	5	6.9%
I would promote unity	4	5.6%
I would collaborate	4	5.6%
I would participate in a group	3	4.2%
I would clean the garbage	3	4.2%
I would organize myself in order to participate to receive	3	4.2%
Do not know what to do	2	2.8%
I would call attention and protest	2	2.8%
I would promote the respect of our rights	1	1.4%
	56	77.8%

* Total number of times each assumption was stated.

People believed that advocating for the barrio was not their direct responsibility but the communal council's duty. Residents recognized the council as the main means of participation in the barrios. This assumption was endorsed by the Council's legal status and its direct channel of communication with the national government, from which the necessary funding to carry out local projects were expected. On the other hand, the assumption that this type of endeavor could not be accomplished individually discourages people to promote and carry out some initiatives, others than the ones offered and sponsored by the communal council or state-funded programs in their areas. Once again, other causes included the lack of time, the misinterpretation of issues and the lack of general motivation and interest in participation. However, local initiatives existed and developed in an attempt to contribute to the solution of some local issues or promote

citizenship values among residents, such as by advocating for religious groups, sport groups, enforcement groups, and others.

Table 44: Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Communal Council	Community Government State-Funded	20	39.2%
None		9	17.6%
The Missions	State-Funded	5	15.7%
Local Nursery		3	
Sport Group (Community based)	Local Group	4	13.7%
Church (Community based)		2	
Enforcement Group (Community based)		1	
The Municipality	Local Government	4	9.8%
IVIMA (Municipal Agency)		1	
INTI (State Agency)	National Government	1	2.0%
The University of Zulia	Non-profit / Academis	1	2.0%
		51	100%

* Total number of times each institution or group was stated.

Chapter 6. Final Discussion

Theoretically, much research has considered the *barrio* a distinctive form of appropriation of urban land, and consequently, of urban housing for the poor, as a “community” problem. A proper definition implies essentially the physical setting or place where the relationships among those individuals, neighbors or *vecinos*, who share the same history of land occupation, self-construction and consolidation, are strengthened and valued. This social and physical definition is further tied to a “spirit of community”, promoted by Gilchrist (2000) as a construct of people’s collective consciousness, which integrates past history and present conditions and consolidates future experiences.

In Maracaibo, Venezuela the interaction with the precarious reality of four poor barrios has allowed for reflection on this interpretation of “community” to go beyond the identification of an implicit physical location and boundaries and the emotionality that professes identity, mutual support, or other collective values tied to common history. The unperceivable linkages among residents of the barrios and their individual or collective expectations, sustained by values such as trust or reciprocity, initially provided the necessary input to the local partnership approach of “Ciudadanía Plena” in Maracaibo to pursue the introduction and consolidation of citizenship. It was intended as an opportunity for citizens to act, organize and get involved in possible forms of participation for the benefit of their households and barrios.

The promotion of citizenship, and participation as an exercise of it, had been already ratified by the 1999 Venezuelan Constitution, which points out, as a principle of its social policy, the universal guarantee to all citizens “the fulfillment of their rights and duties, the equity or equal opportunities according to people’s needs and capabilities; and the participation of citizens”. Nevertheless, the use of the term “citizenship” and its

practice, which, according to Alvarez (1998) has increasingly spread in the Latin American region and recalling the beginning of a “new citizen” in the case of the poor, remains lethargic in the Maracaibo experience. Indeed, during the second phase of the implementation of the program⁵⁴, when external and unexpected opportunities were offered by outside institutions, local people were encouraged to participate and were positively motivated to assess their individual household needs and limitations. However, I perceived a dissimilar reaction when the program invited the same group of beneficiaries to contribute time and effort in solving collective issues affecting the community and, in fact, their own lives.

I found out that people tended to share similar types of household concerns such as their environmental vulnerability, the lack of infrastructure services both in the communities and in the dwellings, the need to consolidate their precarious dwellings, or the limitations in their economic and social development. However, attempts to materialize some kind of improvement in their barrios were usually linked to an institutionalized and legal form of organization, first identified as neighbor associations and, since 2006, recognized as community councils, following the recent Communal Council Law (*Ley de los Consejos Comunales*). In this sense, for the barrio inhabitant, the solution to any issue or problem has symbolized the effort of the community group or its members to whom the responsibility has been given. This attitude still symbolizes the materialization of the paternalistic scheme present in Venezuelan society, in which the population expects that others—the government, other neighbors, other groups, or in this case, programs such as Ciudadania Plena—provide for services and solutions.

Local groups were legally constituted in all the cases. They were registered where necessary and sustained by a small voluntary representation, without the endorsement of

⁵⁴ The first phase of the program covered a pilot experience in 1999. The second phase expanded the program to an initial group of twelve communities in 2002.

the majority of the inhabitants of the barrios. The local political form of organization, the Community Councils, *Consejos Comunales*, are encouraged and supported by the municipal, regional, and national administrations. These groups are officially endorsed by national decrees and laws and can now receive funding directly from the national government.

INTERPRETING THE PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

In order to achieve positive expectations of empowerment and collaboration, it required that members of the organized groups recognize each other and interact. Moreover, it required that governmental institutions recognize the importance of including non-governmental actors in social programs linked to state policies. In the local experience, such pragmatic assumptions transcended the context of implementation and impact in an effort to accomplish greater equity and empowerment in the barrio and in its population. The interaction between the state and civil society was promoted, strengthened, and valued. During the extent of the research, these institutions were accountable to the poor and professionally worked in partnership toward the set goals.

Ciudadanía Plena shared common principles of participatory approaches specified by Pretty et al. (1995). The first principle was the emphasis on multidisciplinary teams of participants and multiple perspectives. The second principle was the application of a defined methodology and a systematic learning process, which emphasized cumulative learning by all the participants—both the professional facilitators and the local people. The third principle was concerned with the transformation of existing activities to try to improve people's situation with the help of the external expert to facilitate people in carrying out their own study and therefore achieve some outcome. The fourth principle supported the idea that participation leads to debate about change—physical, social, and economic—and that this debate changes the perception of participants. The fifth and final

principle related to the specific context in which the methodologies were applied. They were flexible enough to be adapted to suit each new set of conditions and actors, and so there were multiple variants of strategies.

From 2002 to 2006, the partnership approach was a successful model that followed the first principle and represented a theoretical and practical example to replicate, which I experienced as a unique local development practice and an achievement for the municipality. The implementation of Ciudadanía Plena represented the success of a decentralized effort by the municipal administration and the exercise of a paradigm based on democratization and poverty reduction. Local capacity existed and was able to prioritize and implement participatory methodologies to pursue these premises. This same local capacity promoted the application, the evaluation and the retrofitting of the kind of instruments and strategies to ensure that knowledge from the base could be productive for people's well being and, thus, for the sustainability of a poverty-reduction program in the four barrios.

The initiative put into practice an innovative scheme of interaction between institutions in all the levels of planning and implementation of local development programs. The two non-governmental organizations, as members of the Board of Directors, had a legitimate right to participate in the decision-making of program policies and methodologies. Moreover, as members of the Management Committee, they participated in the logistics of implementation; in the supervision of the use of funding as members of the credit committee; and in the retrofitting and follow-up strategies as participants of main self-assessment events. In these important positions within the administrative bodies, the local University, represented by the HABITAT-LUZ Foundation, and the NGO N.A. Cesap played an important unbiased role, advocating for

the objectives of development. In this way, both institutions contributed to the perceived transparency of the government-based project and its accountability.

Despite the difficulties of implementation, and the political compromise typically present in state institutions, the acceptance of the multidisciplinary team of participants was central. Effective partnership required not just changes in administrative procedures but also changes in mind-set, so that all partners—the municipality, the HABITAT-LUZ foundation, N.A. Cesap—saw themselves as experts in their specific areas of action but also as learners. This assumption contributed to the collective learning through the experience, at least from the first four years to when my research concluded its fieldwork. Both governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the residents of the barrios, were committed to expanding their rights and opportunities for self-development. In this sense, the educational process positively contributed to reach certain levels of empowerment in both the provider and the recipient.

The cooperation scheme, or consortium, proved to be effective in preserving an open agenda, but it depended on the willingness of the program's director and the city Mayor to preserve the collaborative approach. During the time the research was conducted, the expectations of the project director matched the objectives of the program, which she expressed and validated when necessary. As a consequence of a positive and professional attitude, this director openly acknowledged the expert advice in other areas that were out of the scope of municipal employees when needed. The attitude allowed reviewing the relationship between the institutions regularly. The partner institutions perceived this condition as necessary and significant to preserve the integrity of the agreement that was signed back in 1998.

The program also followed characteristics outlined by other authors (Buroz 1998, Narayan 2000, Crackwell 2000) who emphasize the need to carry on participatory

processes; such as early consultation with the persons or groups that are directly or indirectly involved and are directly affected by the project, the involvement of people that, because of their worry or expertise, may have appropriate information about the effects, the willingness of other groups to participate, and a measurement and evaluation of outcomes.

In addition to the openness offered by community organizations to communicate and introduce Ciudadanía Plena in the barrios, program agents also used the opportunities for informal networking as a tool to operate in these areas and promote the notion of solidarity groups as a participatory approach. With the application of this approach, individuals could “agree to work together to fulfill an obligation” (Tennyson 1998). In theory, the “solidarity group approach” certainly bypassed the prescribed and bureaucratic procedures of formal credit market allocation to implement a financial scheme based on social values such as trust, confidence, and responsibility as main collaterals. In the practice, the approach was not fully accepted.

The program contributed to people’s motivation to participate in solidarity groups. As seen in introductory meetings in all the barrios, people were reluctant to organize into groups. As an effect of the citizenship education and the proper orientation, many participants accepted the cooperative scheme and contacted other neighbors to conform their groups. However, when asked about their general experience within their solidarity group, only 35% of those participants that were interviewed stated a positive experience with his or her associates.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Education and training consolidated the basis of the second and third principles of participatory approaches. They represented a sustainable investment in people, and so were important ways to put a capacity-building approach to development into practice

(Eade 1998), which led to positive outcomes. Citizenship education was achieved by the beneficiaries. It sought attitudinal change (Eade 1998), and since evaluating its impact necessarily involved subjective judgment, it became important in regards to empowerment. The critical ingredient provided was the opportunity for reflection “to create reason and opportunity to step back and think about the implications of a problem solving experience, and to extract some useable knowledge from it” (Mai 1996).

The program encouraged local people, as “the experts in their own living environment” (Veltmeyer 2001), to define the nature of their individual and household problems and those identified in their communities. This exercise of reflection and action was facilitated in community meetings and citizenship education workshops. It was followed up in personalized visits to the household conducted by the local advisor appointed by the program in each community. This professional assisted them to determine, with the support of outside technical expertise, the best and possible solutions and the implementation procedures. It was also true, and once again validated in this research, that despite negative experiences, unexpected outcomes and distrust, when outsiders approach the poor, they are willing to trust and listen with the hope that “something good may happen in their lives” (Narayan 2000).

Low-income people approached the development agency with the initial purpose of requesting any kind of financial assistance because this was marketed as available and because people were informed by their local leaders that it was part of the program’s aims to strengthen the local economy and the quality of life in the barrios by allocating resources.

People participated in *Ciudadanía Plena* in response to some perceived interest and remained involved as long as that interest persisted⁵⁵. Once the same people

⁵⁵ Sanoff (2000) points out a similar conclusion in different projects.

acknowledged that possible benefits from the state were tied to a list of credit requirements and that they had to “deal with” an unexpected citizenship education process, the perceived general interest was that of doing the training quickly in order to receive money. Their misinterpretation of opportunities and rights in society and the limitations faced on a daily basis usually caused this attitude. Nevertheless, the main goal of the development practitioner in the barrio was to encourage in the beneficiaries a process of dialogue and reflection through their participation in the citizenship education process. The introductory sessions attempted to make people understand that the mission of the development program was not, in essence, the financial gain but the construction of citizenship. At this point, this assumption emphasized the third principle of participatory approaches (Pretty et al. 1995) by facilitating people in carrying out their own study and achieving outcomes.

People accepted the general advice and recommendations. At the end, they were able to recognize themselves as respected and accountable when a professional architect or economist assisted them in their own homes, or when a professional facilitator spent some time with them in workshops, events that they had not thought possible before.

The acceptance that a change in values is possible can only be perceived in the long run, at least in more precise statistical terms that can help validate the research arguments. Nevertheless, the number of testimonies that I confronted during the participant observation contributed to important conclusions. In this regard, before attending the citizen education workshops, people frequently had the propensity to reject any type of participatory events. They thought these were a means of manipulation and had many doubts and concerns about negotiating with government agents. What sustained this condition, according to the facilitators, was the acknowledgment of the uncertainty in which they live, their low self-esteem and the acceptance that someone else

can be an advocate. Why me? What are you going to take from me? People tended to ask these questions.

The research demonstrated that people could surpass these initial attitudes. In most of the cases, the same people that showed a hesitant interest to initiate the citizenship education and wanted to conclude the workshop series as soon as possible to receive the financial benefit, expressed their concerns and personal expectations more openly as long as they moved through the learning and reflection experience. This outcome supported the fourth principle of participatory approaches, emphasizing debate as a tool to promote changes in perception. In all participatory events that I was able to observe, from workshop to workshop, people moved from uncertainty or reluctance to participation and recognition. A subsequent finding, identified after residents participated in citizenship workshops, verified the disposition of beneficiaries to carry out self-evaluation and assess change, expecting a positive impact from the training experience. People assumed a different attitude as individuals and members of their communities as well. Nevertheless, the expectations outside the learning environment, usually tied to the day-to-day struggle and the improper continuity of the community-planned initiatives promoted in the workshops, were not necessarily followed up.

Results from participatory assessments of beneficiaries and facilitators recommended the necessity of integrating all the learning material in use with a common emphasis to undertake self-reflection and response. In this way, people perceived individual and group transformation and expected empowerment goals as possible. In this sense, 62% of beneficiaries affirmed to have experienced positive changes of attitude towards their relatives and neighbors, highlighting values such as responsibility, solidarity, communication, awareness and mutual support among group members.

Change was perceived as possible and as a consequence of people's own action. However, political factors that coexisted in the communities coerced the change. In general, leaders were willing to participate and to encourage neighbors to participate. Nevertheless, when there was no political empathy, neighbors felt dissatisfied with the work carried out by the local institutions and the municipality. Political factors commonly seen in low-income communities, such as clientelism, favoritism, the influence of power groups, benefits granted for political support, among others, were present in the four barrios and preconditioned people's identification with the objectives of the program. Moreover, there existed a generalized discontent with the leaders and the lack of communication between them and many residents.

The involvement of the NGOs was important in keeping the unbiased perspective of the development program in moments when it was politically judged as intrusive and a form of proselytism in the barrio. As evidence of innovation, the program sought to challenge this unconstructive attitude and emphasized the significance of community and participation to counteract these political factors, by putting into practice procedures to interact with community residents and leaders and build up a more honest connection between the program and the community. Among the achievements and contributions that I can highlight were the political will to leave aside the political interest, the discrimination, the favoritism, the political continuity that guaranteed the stability of the program (two city mayors of different political affiliations in the last ten years), and the willingness to promote and carry out reciprocal communication between the institutions and communities.

The social actors maintained the same political neutrality, the tolerance and the direct contact as premises that guided the work with the client or beneficiary. By the end of the fieldwork, some local economic advisers still perceived the program as a project

with the expectation of tangible results in economic terms, and not as a long-term program with a broader impact in people's recognition of citizenship values and self-improvement. The day-by-day goals of the municipal employee who needed to accomplish their weekly or monthly quotas prevailed. Facilitators emphasized the need to pay attention to this general belief in order to increase the effectiveness of these local actors.

Financial sustainability was sought, though not yet reached, as it progressively became a subsidized service of the local government with some autonomy to make decisions. The municipality did not consistently measure results, other than the assessment of some financial indicators mainly associated with the rate of return or the debt rate, and basic qualitative indicators of acceptance, adjustment, or involvement in community activities interpreted as attendance to meetings and workshops.

The program gradually concentrated its effort in planning and implementing individual projects, even though these were tied to solidarity groups. The follow-up of such individually-oriented endeavors consumed a lot of administrative time and resources.

RESPONSE TO THE MAIN QUESTIONS

The first hypothesis, stated at the beginning of the research, was validated by the interpretation of principles and objectives of the program during the implementation, and in the dynamics of the activities of promotion and consciousness-building and self-development. The empowerment in community projects and the strengthening of civic values could be identified in each phase of the program—information, evaluation, education, financing, and construction. Empowerment implied the engagement in a learning and reflection experience, which allowed people to recognize their current condition and state of mind and to visualize, as much as possible, the desired spiritual and

material progress of their families and communities. This was perceived and accomplished in the series of meetings and workshops that I attended. Nevertheless, beyond the educational experience and the successful implementation of individual projects, the program was not able to transcend the motivation toward community-oriented projects and the preservation of the solidarity-group approach.

Empowerment, of the individual as head of household, was strengthened by his or her involvement in the collaborative identification of problems and issues affecting their lives, in all activities planned to tie the relationship among stakeholders, in every recognition and public ceremony, with the respectful dialogue in the decision-making regarding the design and construction proposal, and with the recognition of people's own capacities, which assured collaboration and feedback. Solutions were not imposed on them but rather discussed and validated. Perhaps the amount of money granted was not enough to accomplish the entire construction but it represented an initial stage in the progressive consolidation of dwellings. People recognized and accepted their financial limitations and positively assumed the initiation of a series of construction phases toward this goal.

The second hypothesis, which addressed the meaning of citizenship values as an applicable tool tied to the development strategy, was positively confirmed in the observation of workshops, participatory assessments and in the evaluation of the individual interviews. But it was also significant evidence to affirm that not only had the low-income clients benefited from the same citizenship education. Program agents also stated the benefits of participating in the educational experience as professionals, as citizens, and individuals, had reflected on the attitudes and commitments with the program and its clients. Moreover, the generally accepted underlying principle was not to

provide financial assistance but to build citizenship, on behalf of the sustainability of the investments and the urban development plans.

At the organizational level, the partner institutions and their staff members assumed the commitment with the objectives of the program, and showed their motivation toward the positive evaluation and transformation of the process. Clientelistic mechanisms were broken as the institutions demonstrated unbiased interests. In spite of the need to publicly demonstrate efficiency by means of allocating financial resources and granting credits, these professionals transcended their sensibility and compromise with the cause of the poor.

The training in organizational development was a motivating and continuous empowering tool. Carrying out this type of participatory experience made the group reflect on the singularity and individuality of each community and beneficiary. It also allowed the acceptance of an institutional network as a means to achieve the development goals and to advance a teamwork practice that managed to integrate diverse actors in spite of the difficult ideological and political differences that persisted in the country and in the city. The program coexisted in this environment with these different perspectives. Nevertheless, and despite the fact that the team reflected in self-assessments on the importance of its effort in the barrios, which contributed to the strengthening of the organizational development of the institution, social transformation was still compelled by the political setting and the necessity of local leaders to show to a captive electorate that the achievements of the municipality, the mayor, and the Venezuelan president, were accountable.

I could validate the third hypothesis, which addressed the application of citizenship education in the development program as means to motivate individual and collective attitude change, in two distinct ways. First, by the thoughts, behaviors and

opinions observed in many beneficiaries; as individuals expressed in personal interviews, and second, as members of their communities, in workshops and other participatory events. These interpretations were validated in responses regarding the positive achievements of the citizenship education that accompanied the credit program. Beneficiaries, with the guidance of the practitioner in workshops, recognized their existing situation, were able to visualize their needs and acknowledged their role in the decisions that would affect their lives. Nevertheless, it was determined that many people initially attended the workshops with the only intention of obtaining credit, or even a monetary subsidy, to go through the training requirement as quickly as possible in order to receive the money, and leave without paying back.

But what changes were perceived in residents of these local low-income settlements and municipal agents while processes of dialogue, education, and reflection in action guided the development process?

In post-credit interviews, half of the sample group (53%) recognized that, after participating in the training workshops, they were able to recognize the importance of having a different attitude, and a change in their approach to life (Figure 17 in p.237). Nevertheless, a positive attitudinal change was not a perceptible outcome for 41% of the group. People valued the psychosocial advising that was available and offered by the facilitators and the design and construction recommendations given by the architect appointed by the program during the personalized visits to their homes. These visits were also important for the motivation of the beneficiaries. When the second phase of implementation started, people doubted the possibility that a professional designer would meet with them in their own “simple” houses to talk and collaborate in the solution of housing design issues.

I confirmed the same hypothesis by the interpretations of the achievements concerning the behavior of some community leaders. The support of these local leaders was important to introduce the program in the communities and to reach the objectives of development, even though it was necessary at certain moments to gain the support of the NGOs. The presence of non-political institutions guaranteed the objectivity of the program and made people aware that local development issues could be detached from political or personal interests.

I found out that community leaders were capable of motivating and gathering together the neighbors or simply ignoring the presence of the program in their barrios. This latter behavior was seen by some neighbors as an attitude of refusal of possible benefits for the community and a lack of support for the inhabitants of the barrio. In this case, the self-motivation by program facilitators was more significant and valuable than leadership guidance. Other residents, in a few cases, and following a leader's judgment, withdrew their credit applications and with them, the possibility of improving their living condition. This attitude did not only affect neighbors, but curbed the leaders' opportunities to strengthen their capabilities and aptitude. The permanent political dispute expressed by community leaders in all the barrios decreased their participation in development initiatives and made other inhabitants do the same, reducing the opportunities because of not getting involved.

In reality, people did not want to withdraw but felt manipulated when the program delayed in 2002 and 2003. This situation was a constant in all the barrios, even though it was caused by FIDES in Caracas, the main financial contributor to the program, and not by the local administration in Maracaibo. FIDES delayed the delivery of resources and the creation of the fund for more than one year, a condition that obliged the program coordinator to defer, in the same way, the allocation of loans, despite the fact that people

were highly motivated, already instructed in citizenship values, and financially evaluated. Residents did not expect to receive this early treatment, and accused the program of being manipulative and politically driven. To overcome such unconstructive criticism, the program constantly informed the communities about the status of the negotiation to preserve the stability of the solidarity groups and its presence in the communities. As a result, it took more than a year for the appropriate self-evaluation and retrofitting of the program to effectively attend and give properly respond to people's demand in an efficient time frame, that is, from the initial contact with prospective beneficiaries to the materialization of projects and investments.

People did not participate unless they believed that an interest or individual benefit was possible; and for them, the immediate interest was economic. In this sense, the program attempted to motivate civic engagement in addition to personal self-development, and to promote a different, new attitude than the one that was commonly expressed in the initial workshops and informal conversations. The lack of effective communication and personal commitment on the part of many beneficiaries made many people reject the premise of the solidarity group. As a consequence, people that failed to consolidate their groups, based on confidence and mutual respect, confronted problems of paying back their credits and preserving the stability of their groups. This combination of individual responsibility with collective decision-making demanded an atmosphere of trust. According to Sanoff (2000), trust is developed essentially through interpersonal interaction that provides a basis for dealing effectively with change.

Without doubts, the recovery has depended on the economic growth and wellbeing of each family, but the generation of jobs or a stable income has not been sufficient to fulfill the initial commitment of participation and action. It was necessary that people develop and exercise their capacities, abilities, knowledge, information and

motivation—necessary conditions to improve their quality of life with the support of other members of their groups.

TANGIBLE RESULTS

Outcomes indicated the need to sustain the program. Results demonstrate that a progressive transformation of a low-income dwelling was possible and positive for its inhabitants. Despite the support, 9% of the sample group did not make proper use of the financial assistance and did not materialize any improvement for distinct reasons.

In regard to the accomplishment of tangible changes for their families and communities:

- 72% of the interviewees recognized that they had materialized some improvement in their dwellings; while the rest considered slight or no tangible progress;
- 62% perceived a positive change of attitude toward their families and neighbors.
- 82% would like to continue the improvement process, either physical or personal based on their achievements and experiences during the learning and construction processes. Those who would reject this opportunity would base their decision on financial constraints.

People associated changes to the following values from high to low frequency of response: being more confident, reaching mutual support, improving communication, strengthening unity, consciousness, and achieving better social relations.

Opportunities for local environmental development were not given the necessary weight as well. A very limited number of people recognized potential environmental hazards in their communities. Individuals were only concerned with preserving the physical stability of their own dwellings. Beyond the solution of a household problem, the interest to look after the environment in a collective way or to associate it to the

community's quality of life was not realized. People expressed some of the reasons that encourage this conduct, which included lack of education concerning the subjects and issues they ought to address, their low motivation and personal commitment, and the lack of time to contribute to collective projects. The relatively low level of participation of the majority of the members of the community prevailed. In this sense:

Table 45: Impact in regard to participation.

	2002	2006
He/She believes it will bring them problems	18%	12%
He/She does not know	0%	6%
He/She is not interested	17%	18%
He/She does not have enough time	48%	44%
He/She does have other problems	6%	6%
He/She was more active	2%	6%
Does not apply	9%	12%

Source: 2002 Survey and 2006 interviews of beneficiaries

- 46% pointed out that they had not participated in any kind of community group or participatory experience before and confirmed that they remained in the same condition.
- Only 6% affirmed that they had committed to being more active in their local groups.

The outcome proved the difficulty of incorporating a larger number of residents outside of those who have always been involved and interested in community-related activities.

Participation was important for most of the participants. People recognized that the program positively contributed to this interpretation. However, active involvement remained stagnant and did not increase beyond the immediate activities carried out during the implementation phase. Participation, as an attitude, was seen in individuals who traditionally have participated and in those who were affiliated with political ideologies and legal forms of organization, such as the communal council, previously identified as the neighbor association. These groups represented the main channel and means to obtain resources and accomplish local projects, but, in many cases, were associated with corruption, control and influences, and politics.

REFLECTION

The local development experience has not ended with the accomplishment of the research objectives. The scope of my work covers a limited period, which has contributed to this series of outcomes and interpretations. Until the end of my direct interaction with the staff of Ciudadanía Plena and the beneficiaries in the four barrios, the organization was guided by a person with social sensibility, motivated toward working in the community. At that moment, it was expected that a new manager would assume the coordination, with a different management style and approach. I am gladly convinced that my contact and communication with community residents and leaders was highly rich and fruitful, for both my contribution to the field of community development and my self-reflection and learning experience. These personal outcomes are greatly enhanced when paired with the research contribution in my city and in my country.

Ciudadanía Plena initiated the allocation of resources and the educational process in 2003 in eleven barrios in four parishes of the municipality of Maracaibo, all of them located within the city limits. The initial number was very limited considering that the

total number of barrios in the municipality accounted for 328, including those located in the urban protection zone. Nevertheless, the implementation has not ceased. In 2006, the number had increased to 54 communities, and the program was finally present in all fifteen parishes of the Municipality. Attention was expanded to include poor neighborhoods in the western periphery and in the consolidated sectors of the city to the east. It is expected that this number, as well as the number of beneficiaries, will rise.

The style of local development management that I witnessed will remain as long as the social and political guidelines that are promoted by the municipal government and the Mayor in turn continue in accordance with the unbiased and reciprocal development goals of the program. This condition is critical in planning approaches to overcome local poverty and strengthen citizenship values such as identity, cooperation, and participation.

The Maracaibo experience failed as “many training programs supported in the name of capacity building that have not significantly strengthened people’s collective or organizational capacities” (Eade 1998). However, by the time this research ended, a perceivable empowerment and partnership approach still guided Ciudadanía Plena toward these goals. The attention and dedication in these four barrios was based on the need to materialize an ideal that was expected to expand in order to reach more communities in the near future. The key to success may be here: in its transparency, its material incentive and citizenship education component to achieve self-improvement. This latter component, as seen in the responses of beneficiaries, should not end with the allocation of credits and not cease to encourage participation beyond the household.

A retrofitting process should address the learning and reflection experience in order to include, if necessary, additional contents or strategies, and new participants to expand the benefits and strengthen the community. Despite improvement of the household’s quality of life, I further recommend that more attention be centered in

transforming the “local citizen” into “the active citizen”—a person that not only is aware of his or her rights and responsibilities per the law, but also a representative of a new form of behavior, both social and moral, which the Venezuelan society expects. This behavior should be identified in his/her involvement in public life and in affairs that affect the collective, as an expression of citizenship in action with the beliefs that dependency (Fiszbein and Lowden 1999) can be replaced by empowerment and independence and that changes in the environment can respond to his/her control.

Ciudadanía Plena will probably not change the political geography of the city or the region nor dispute the parameters of democracy in the country. But they made a contribution by promoting in poor communities the notion of “citizen” “for whom the first goal of the struggle is often to demonstrate that they are people with rights, so as to recover their dignity and status as citizens and even as human beings” (Alvarez 1998). The exercise proved not to be automatic. It depended on people wanting to exercise their rights and local capacities. Local participation, in turn, depended on people’s feeling that they have reasons to participate and available time to commit.

The deepening of democratic practice by way of participation cannot be “decreed”. It is a process that takes time. It calls for a process of formation which requires “technical assistance, a sustained experience of participation, adjustments in the innovations and, finally, institutionalization” (Lopez 2008). In addition to any physical development that attempts to improve the quality of life of citizens, capacity development can and must also be on of its components. It becomes a process of realizing that all people are citizens able to receive support as well as provide support to others.

Appendix A. National Housing Policy

The principle that guides the Venezuelan government's actions during this current presidential term is to "assist the people", especially the low-income groups, using equalitarian and populist approaches. According to its urban development strategy, the current administration (President Hugo Chavez, 1999-2001, 2001-2007 and 2007-2013) has proposed housing policies that seek to provide the poor residents of uncontrolled settlements (*barrios*) the better living conditions enjoyed by the rest of Venezuela's citizens. The National Housing Council—*Conavi*—has pointed out that the state counts on an essential condition to face this problem: a law that demands the state to invest five percent of the national budget in programs and projects that support assistance to those social groups that cannot afford homes. According to the 1999–2004 Housing Policy, housing programs, with their correspondent public services and maintenance works, were decentralized to transfer all kinds of resources to the municipal power, and beyond, toward the organized communities. In these terms, in order to achieve this ultimate goal, five subprograms were developed to attend to the low-incomes urban settlers. Even though all the programs are briefly described, only one—subprogram II—seemed to embody the goals and activities associated with the case studied in this research.

Subprogram I was conceived to attend to those Venezuelans without a home and who live in the streets, a population that accounts for 0.5% of the urban population according to the government, an amount that could reach 96,000 indigents, abandoned persons and street children. The proposed intervention in this area included the design and construction of new facilities, such as shelters and collective housing.

The main goal of subprogram II was to urbanize existing groups of neighborhoods. On a larger scale, physical rehabilitation can be achieved by the design

and construction of local road infrastructures, adequate urban and community services, and new housing units to substitute those in hazardous locations that could be affected by natural disasters in areas conformed by groups of barrios. In addition, this subprogram promoted the organization of the residents of communities in the process of physical rehabilitation and sought to integrate the barrios with the formal city, level their quality of life and overcome the physical consequences of rapid and uncontrolled urbanization⁵⁶. The physical rehabilitation of barrios received the largest amount of the financial resources available for the public housing sector (50%). The subprogram included additional components, such as micro-credit for housing improvements, the creation of local micro-enterprises for dwelling construction and maintenance, support to collective projects in the cultural, educational or health areas, and appropriate advice in the legal constitution of local organizations.

Subprogram III was developed simultaneously with the physical rehabilitation of barrios, with the same characteristics as subprogram II and through the same agencies, NGOs and organized communities. In addition to the improvement of dwellings in poor neighborhoods, improving people's capacity to individually or collectively manage and administer projects in the barrios became an important objective. Agencies that were affiliated with The National Saving and Loan Bank (*Banco Nacional de Ahorro y Préstamo*) were authorized to provide individual loans to families.

Subprogram IV promoted the physical rehabilitation of existing public housing complexes that showed a considerable degree of deterioration, and in which residents could not afford the high costs of recovery. Although residents in parts of these developments had higher incomes and better socio-economic conditions than barrio

⁵⁶ 85% of the Venezuelan population is urban. More than 50% of this urban population (13 million) lives in barrios, representing the most dynamic form of occupation of space. These developments tend to remain in time, while the dwellings become the main, but unique, economic asset of their inhabitants.

inhabitants, the government could not exclude the fact that, more and more, public housing developments (*urbanizaciones populares*) were occupied by residents with conditions barely higher, similar or lower than the low-income groups. The physical rehabilitation of public housing developments received 10% of the financial resources available for the public housing sector.

The National Housing Policy also proposed a Progressive Housing and Urban Development (neighborhoods) Program, or subprogram V, which sought to control the growth of additional irregular settlements, which, in fact, would reduce the deficiencies in this particular sector. In this way, the government assisted low-income families by providing new housing that had the possibility to be built in stages. The social rationale for the subprogram provided that include technical assistance, as the stages of planning, programming, designing, and construction were covered and with the interventions of diverse public and private agents. The Progressive Housing and Urban Development Program received 21% of the budget of the public housing sector.

The housing provision system has been implemented with little success due to institutional incapacity, inefficient public management and the discontinuity of policies and laws (Genatios and LaFuente 2004). This failure is expressed in the few new housing units built or repaired over the past years. Despite “structural and organizational” governmental changes and the emphasis on stakeholder participation, the construction of new housing units has progressively decreased throughout the years. Data on average annual construction rates show: 1986-1988, 72,390 units; 1989, 12,930 units; 1990-1996, 42,990 units; and 1999-2004, 20,000 units. In 2005 the ministry promoted the construction of 120,000 units without success.

From 2005 the amount has not changed. In 2007, even though a smaller goal was programmed, the government was still unable to reach it. Searching for more

participation, the Ministry transferred to the organized communities the Rancho Replacement Program (SUVI). The aim of the program was to upgrade more than 60,000 units, with an investment of US\$ 1500 million. But the program, which considered a new praxis of housing policy, has not reached its goal. Consequently, civic protest and discontent has increased.

The problem is not necessarily the deficit but the critical poverty that characterizes the demand, the uncertainty of the market, and the loss of stakeholder confidence. The annual housing production does not satisfy the demand of new units (100,000 per year). On average, an estimate of 40,000 dwellings is built per year, not reaching that demand, and increasing the already large deficit. The country's income levels have improved due to increased oil revenues, but without generating visible impacts in these citizens' quality of life.

The housing policy formulation remains highly centralized and top down, in opposition to the principles that should guide a sustainable affordable housing policy: simplicity, transparency and clarity, and targeted to the needs of citizens. Not to mention flexibility in the means of execution and management systematization to generate synergy-partnerships among stakeholders and a sustainable habitat for all.

Appendix B. Housing Sector Planning in Venezuela

At the end of the 20th century, the urbanization of poverty in Venezuela, caused by the inefficient management of affordable housing policies and programs for the poor, accounted for 2,800 poor barrios, inhabited by 12 million people (50% of the country's population) in an area of approximately 140,000 hectares (Arquiluz 2005). In the last 75 years, 2.4 million self-built *ranchos* have been produced (Arquiluz 2005). These barrios, a result of illegal land occupation, are mainly located on the periphery and in the urban gaps of the formal city. They contribute to urban expansion-sprawl, the waste of land (low density), and an increase of urbanization costs. In 2007, the national housing deficit accounted for 1.8 million units. 60% of the existing stock is self-made ranchos that need upgrading. Therefore, the total demand has resulted in approximately 2.5 million units (Baldo, cited in Marti 2007).

According to some authors, the problem of housing deficit is a myth. The real problem is the critical poverty that characterized the demand, the enormous “deficit of conditions” through which people can have access to affordable housing in a sustainable and healthy environment. It is a paradox: a “rich oil-producing country” with an important population that does not have access to affordable housing and a sustainable habitat (Cilento 2006). Long-term financing mechanisms are expensive in an economy with high inflation (second highest in Latin America and the Caribbean. This situation worsens as unemployment grows. Consequently, the effectiveness of policies diminishes.

The political context—Bolivarian revolution—has been determinant in deconstructing and re-building a complex, inefficient, and constantly changing legal and institutional framework for housing provision and habitat improvement. This general perception has generated uncertainty in the market and very poor results. For some

authors, the “incapacity” of the public institutions to reach the annual housing goals is a fundamental problem. The failure to formulate the correct policies to impact the quality of life of the poor citizens’ habitat , the barrios, and the structural deficit of affordable housing is caused by the absence of a clear vision of the problem, political will, centralism, populism, excessive bureaucracy, institutional lack of coordination and overlapping functions, among others.

HOUSING PROVISION SYSTEM

Starting with the creation of the Workers Bank—Banco Obrero—(pioneer institution in LAC) in 1928, different institutions were created to plan the housing provision system. The bank acted as the state planner and developer of new housing. In 1975, the Bank was replaced by the National Institute for Housing (INAVI) to formulate and execute, through decentralized and autonomous regional and municipal agencies, the housing policies established in the National Development Plan. Since 1976, the Ministry of Urban Development (MINDUR), currently the Ministry of Infrastructure (MINFRA), coordinated the housing programs through INAVI and the municipalities, by means of Urban Development Plans.

In 1990, the Law of Housing Policy was approved as a mandatory saving system, composed of the contributions of the public and private sectors and the workers. The Law, reformulated several times, created the National Housing Council (CONAVI), to research, plan and coordinate private and public interventions in the housing sector. Between 1999 and 2004, CONAVI successfully developed the “Barrio Upgrading Program” is an attempt to integrate these areas with the urban structure and to increase the quality of life of residents. In 2005, due to political reasons and poor results, INAVI and CONAVI were consolidated into the Ministry of Housing and Habitat (MHH) following the new Lending Law for Housing and Habitat (LLHH). Also in 2005, the

government launched Mission Habitat and Mission Villanueva as a “strategy of *universality* of solutions” to solve the problems associated with housing and habitat conditions. The MHH was renamed in 2007 the Ministry of Popular Power for Housing and Habitat (MPPHH). The scales of intervention of the MPPHH are: urban, rural, indigenous, and special zones.

The Ministry of Housing and Habitat, following the LLHH, formulates the current housing policy and integrates the stakeholders in the planning-management of this sector. The National Housing and Habitat Policy defines national strategies and goals, priorities in regards to the attention and development of the sector at regional and municipal levels, the finance policies for housing development planning, and the finance policies to stimulate the production of and access to affordable housing. This policy is implemented through plans and programs (Table 25).

Table 46: Housing Plans and Programs

POLICY AND HOUSING PLANS	HOUSING PROGRAMS
<p>National Level: National Development Plan, National Annual Operational Plan, National Research Plan, National Technical Support Plan.</p> <p>Regional Level: Regional Plans.</p> <p>Municipal Level: Municipal Plans, Parish Plans, Community Plans.</p>	<p>Rancho Replacement (SUVI)</p> <p>Substitution of Existing Housing</p> <p>Urban de-concentration in new settlements located in the periphery</p>

Source: ANRBV 2005.

The Ministry has developed a plan to guide the approval, delivery, and monitoring of resources from a “Mandatory Fund for Housing” (FOAH) to finance families with incomes up to 2,085 Bolivars (US\$ 970). This Fund constitutes the savings of all workers, a portion of the national budget (14%) and other funds or international loans.

The interest rate applied to housing loans varies in regards to household income, while the market interest rate is 20%.

The housing provision system has been implemented with little success due to institutional incapacity, inefficient public management and the discontinuity of policies and laws (Genatios and LaFuente 2004). This failure is expressed in the few new housing units built or repaired during the past years. Despite “structural and organizational” governmental changes and the emphasis in stakeholder participation, the construction of new housing units has progressively decreased throughout the years, as data on average annual construction rates show: 1986-1988, 72,390 units; 1989, 12,930 units, 1990-1996, 42,990 units, and 1999-2004, 20,000 units (Genatios and LaFuente 2004). In 2005 the ministry promoted the construction of 120,000 units without success. From 2005 the amount has not changed. In 2007, even though a smaller goal was programmed, the government was yet unable to achieve it (Ferrer et al. 2007).

Searching for more participation, the Ministry transferred to the organized communities the *Rancho* Replacement Program (SUVI). The aim of the program was to upgrade more than 60,000 units, with an investment of US\$ 1,500 million. But the program, considering a new praxis the housing policy, has not reached its goal. Consequently, civic protest and discontent has increased.

Appendix C. Household Survey conducted by Ciudadania Plena (In Spanish)

Alcaldía de Maracaibo		vacía por (iniciales)				182
Fundación Hábitat-LUZ		revisado por economista		revisado arq/ing		
Nuevo Amanecer-CESAP		proyecto crédito		presupuesto		
Instituto de Investigaciones de la Facultad de Arquitectura y Diseño -Universidad del Zulia (IFAD-LUZ)						
Programa de Gestión Urbana para América Latina y el Caribe (PGU-ALC/HÁBITAT)						
"Programa Ciudadanía Plena"						
Sub-Proyecto "Mejoramiento de la vivienda y el hábitat" (Proyecto Vivienda Digna)						
1.	Fecha: ____/____/____		2. Información Socioeconómica levantada por:			
3.	Parroquia:					
4.	Barrio:					
11.	Nacionalidad:	11.1. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	12.	Si es nacionalizado o extranjero, tiempo		
11.2.	Venezolano <input type="checkbox"/>	11.3. Extranjero Legal <input type="checkbox"/>	de residencia en el país:			
11.4.	Nacionalizado <input type="checkbox"/>	11.5. Extranjero ilegal <input type="checkbox"/>	13.	Tiempo de residencia en el sector:		
14.	Lugar de Nacimiento:		15.	Fecha de Nacimiento:		
11.3.1. Si es extranjero legal, indique si su visa es:		11.3.1.1. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>		11.3.1.2. Turista <input type="checkbox"/>		
11.3.1.3. Residente <input type="checkbox"/>		11.3.1.4. de Transeunte <input type="checkbox"/>		11.3.1.5. Otro, especifique:		
16.	Estado civil:	16.1. Soltero <input type="checkbox"/>	16.2. Casado <input type="checkbox"/>	16.3. Divorciado <input type="checkbox"/>	16.4. Viudo <input type="checkbox"/>	16.5. Unido <input type="checkbox"/>
17.	Tiempo de convivencia con la pareja:					
18.	Nivel de Instrucción:	18.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	18.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	18.3. Primaria <input type="checkbox"/>		
		18.4. Secundaria <input type="checkbox"/>	18.5. Técnica <input type="checkbox"/>	18.6. Superior <input type="checkbox"/>		
19.	Profesión (u oficio):					
20.	Ocupación Actual:	20.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	20.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	20.3. Comerciante <input type="checkbox"/>		
		20.4. Oficios de Hogar <input type="checkbox"/>	20.5. Obrero(a) <input type="checkbox"/>	20.6. Otro, especifique:		
		20.7. Servicio Doméstico <input type="checkbox"/>	20.8. Estudiante <input type="checkbox"/>			
21.	Condición de ocupación:					
		21.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	21.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	21.3. Empleado(a) <input type="checkbox"/>		
		21.4. Desempleado <input type="checkbox"/>	21.5. Ocasional <input type="checkbox"/>	21.6. Cuenta propia <input type="checkbox"/>		
22.	Si usted es desempleado, origen del ingreso:					
23.	Lugar de trabajo:			24. Antigüedad laboral:		
25.	Dirección de trabajo:					
26.	Sector laboral:	26.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	26.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	26.3. Formal <input type="checkbox"/>	26.4. Informal <input type="checkbox"/>	
27.	¿Acumula usted prestaciones?		27.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	27.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	27.3. NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		27.4. Si <input type="checkbox"/>	a) c/6 meses <input type="checkbox"/>	b) c/año <input type="checkbox"/>	c) c/2 años <input type="checkbox"/>	1

Source: Authorized by HABITAT- LUZ 2002

DATOS DEL CONYUGE										
34.	Nacionalidad:	34.1.	No sabe	<input type="checkbox"/>	35.	Si es nacionalizado o extranjero, tiempo de residencia en el país:				
34.2.	Venezolano	<input type="checkbox"/>	34.3.	Extranjero Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>					
34.4.	Nacionalizado	<input type="checkbox"/>	34.5.	Extranjero ilegal	<input type="checkbox"/>	36.	Tiempo de residencia en el sector:			
37.	Lugar de Nacimiento:				38.	Fecha de Nacimiento:				
39.	Relación con solicitante:	39.1.	Casado	<input type="checkbox"/>	39.2.	Divorciado	<input type="checkbox"/>	39.3.	Unido	<input type="checkbox"/>
40.	Tiempo de convivencia con la pareja:									
41.	Nivel de Instrucción:	41.1.	N.A.	<input type="checkbox"/>	41.2.	No sabe	<input type="checkbox"/>	41.3.	Primaria	<input type="checkbox"/>
		41.4.	Secundaria	<input type="checkbox"/>	41.5.	Técnica	<input type="checkbox"/>	41.6.	Superior	<input type="checkbox"/>
42.	Profesión (u oficio):									
43.	Ocupación Actual:	43.1.	N.A.	<input type="checkbox"/>	43.2.	No sabe	<input type="checkbox"/>	43.3.	Comerciante	<input type="checkbox"/>
		43.4.	Oficios de Hogar	<input type="checkbox"/>	43.5.	Obrero(a)	<input type="checkbox"/>	43.6.	Otro, especifique:	
		43.7.	Servicio Doméstico	<input type="checkbox"/>	43.8.	Estudiante	<input type="checkbox"/>			
44.	Condición de ocupación:	44.1.	N.A.	<input type="checkbox"/>	44.2.	No sabe	<input type="checkbox"/>	44.3.	Empleado(a)	<input type="checkbox"/>
		44.4.	Desempleado	<input type="checkbox"/>	44.5.	Ocasional	<input type="checkbox"/>	44.6.	Cuenta propia	<input type="checkbox"/>
45.	Si es desempleado, origen del ingreso:									
46.	Lugar de trabajo:				47.	Antigüedad laboral:				
48.	Dirección de trabajo:									
49.	Sector laboral:	49.1.	N.A.	<input type="checkbox"/>	49.2.	No sabe	<input type="checkbox"/>	49.3.	Formal	<input type="checkbox"/>
		49.4.	Informal	<input type="checkbox"/>						
50.	¿Acumula prestaciones?	50.1.	N.A.	<input type="checkbox"/>	50.2.	No sabe	<input type="checkbox"/>	50.3.	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
		50.4.	No sabe	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) c/año	<input type="checkbox"/>	c) c/2 año	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Importante: si se está solicitando un crédito de vivienda es NECESARIO identificar si existen condiciones de riesgo										
CONDICIONES DE RIESGOS DE LA VIVIENDA										
80.	¿Está su vivienda en condiciones de riesgo natural? (p.ej. menos de 25 m de cañadas u otros)									
	80.1 N.A.	<input type="checkbox"/>	80.2 No sabe	<input type="checkbox"/>	80.3. Si, especificar cuál					
	80.4. No	<input type="checkbox"/>								
81.	¿Está su vivienda en condiciones de riesgo por elemen. construidos? (p. ej. cables alta tensión)									
	81.1 N.A.	<input type="checkbox"/>	81.2 No sabe	<input type="checkbox"/>	81.3. Si, especificar cuál					
	81.4. No	<input type="checkbox"/>								

62	¿Tiene créditos pendientes con algún organismos gubernamental, no gubernamental o privado?			
	62.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	62.2 No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	62.3. Si <input type="checkbox"/>	62.4. No <input type="checkbox"/> (pase a la pregunta 65)
63	¿Cuál es el monto de ese crédito?		63a	Cuota mensual que paga por ese crédito:
	Bs. _____			Bs. _____
63b	¿Cuánto le falta pagar por ese crédito?		63c	Tiempo que le falta para pagar ese crédito
	Bs. _____			_____
63d	Mencione el organismo gubernamental, no gubernamental o privado que le otorgó ese crédito			

65	Mencione otro(s) organismo(s) que le ha(n) otorgado créditos e indique el período y para qué:			

59.3	¿Tiene otras deudas pendientes?			
	62.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	62.2 No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	62.3. Si <input type="checkbox"/>	62.4. No <input type="checkbox"/> (pase a pregunta 86)
62a	¿A quién le debe?		62a.1. Familiar o amigo (sin intereses) <input type="checkbox"/>	62a.2. Abasto (sin intereses) <input type="checkbox"/>
	62a.3 Prestamistas <input type="checkbox"/>	62a.4. Comercio (con intereses) <input type="checkbox"/>	62a.5. Otro, especifique _____	
63	¿Cuánto le debe? Total Bs. _____		63a. Cuota mensual que paga: Bs. _____	
	COOPERATIVISMO			
86	¿Sabe lo que es una cooperativa?			
	86.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	86.2 No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	86.3. No <input type="checkbox"/>	86.4. Si <input type="checkbox"/>
87	¿Conoce alguna cooperativa?			
	87.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	87.2 No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	87.3. No <input type="checkbox"/>	87.4. Si <input type="checkbox"/>
88	De ser afirmativa su respuesta, indique cuáles conoce:			
	88.1. Nombre: _____	Ciudad: _____	Objeto: _____	
	88.2. Nombre: _____	Ciudad: _____	Objeto: _____	
89	¿Ha surgido en su barrio alguna cooperativa entre diciembre 2002 y marzo 2003? (pueden ser las mismas citadas en la pregunta anterior)			
	89.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	89.2 No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	89.3. No <input type="checkbox"/>	89.4. Si, y son un número de _____
90	¿Pertenece o ha pertenecido usted a una cooperativa?			
	90.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	90.2 No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	90.3. No <input type="checkbox"/> (pase a pregunta 95)	
	90.4. Si, y su nombre es: _____ y su objeto es (p. ej transporte) _____			
91	¿Está activa esa cooperativa?		91.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	91.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/> 91.3. No <input type="checkbox"/> 91.4. Si. <input type="checkbox"/>
92	Si pertenece a una cooperativa ¿en qué fecha se incorporó ? _____ / _____ / _____			
93	Si perteneció ¿en qué período estuvo incorporado? Desde (año) _____ hasta (año) _____			
94	Si pertenece a una cooperativa ¿Cómo ha sido o es su participación en ella?			
	94.1 N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	94.2 No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	94.3 Miembro <input type="checkbox"/>	
	94.4 Consejo de Administración <input type="checkbox"/>	94.5 Otro, especifique _____		
95	Si no pertenece a ninguna, ¿estaría interesado en formar parte de una cooperativa de ahorro?			
	95.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	95.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	95.3. No <input type="checkbox"/>	95.4. Si <input type="checkbox"/>
96	Si está interesado en pertenecer a una cooperativa de ahorro, explique sus motivos:			

PARTICIPACION COMUNITARIA			
66	Mencione los cinco problemas más importantes que presenta su comunidad:		
	66.1. _____	66.2. _____	
	66.3. _____	66.4. _____	
	66.5. _____	66.6. _____	
67	¿Conoce alguna organización comunitaria en el barrio diferente a la asociación de vecinos?		
	67.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	67.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	67.3. Si <input type="checkbox"/> 67.4. No <input type="checkbox"/> (pase a pregunta 69)
68	De ser afirmativa su respuesta, ¿cuáles conoce y cuáles han sido sus logros según su opinión?		
	68.1. _____	68.2. _____	
	68.3. _____	68.4. _____	
69	¿Considera necesario que existan otros tipos de organizaciones en su comunidad?		
	69.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	69.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	69.3. No <input type="checkbox"/>
	69.4. Si, y propone las siguientes _____		
70	¿Pertenece o ha pertenecido usted o algún miembro de su familia a un grupo vecinal o asociación de vecinos?		
	70.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	70.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	
	70.3. Si, pertenezco y puedo especificar _____ <input type="checkbox"/>		
	70.3.a. Si, un familiar pertenece y puedo especificar _____ <input type="checkbox"/>		
	70.4. Si, un familiar pertenece y no puedo especificar _____ <input type="checkbox"/>		
	70.5. No pertenecemos ni yo ni ninguno de mis familiares <input type="checkbox"/> (pase a pregunta 73)		
71	¿Está activo el grupo? 71.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/> 71.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/> 71.3. Si <input type="checkbox"/> 71.4. No <input type="checkbox"/>		
71a	Si pertenece al grupo, ¿en qué fecha se incorporó? _____ (pase a la pregunta 72)		
71b	Si perteneció al grupo ¿en qué período estuvo incorporado? Desde (año) _____ hasta (año) _____		
72	Si pertenece o perteneció a un grupo ¿Cómo ha sido o es su participación?		
	72.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	72.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	
	72.3. Dirigente <input type="checkbox"/>	72.4. Miembro pasivo <input type="checkbox"/>	
	72.5. Miembro activo <input type="checkbox"/>	72.6. Otra, especifique: _____	
	(pase a la pregunta 73d)		
73	Si no pertenece a ningún grupo, explique por qué:		
	73.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	73.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	
	73.3. No le interesa, no le llama la atención <input type="checkbox"/>	73.4. Cree que no es importante <input type="checkbox"/>	
	73.5. No tiene suficiente tiempo <input type="checkbox"/>	73.6. Cree que es meterse en problemas <input type="checkbox"/>	
	73.7. Otra, especifique: _____		
73a	Si no pertenece, ¿está dispuesto a participar en algún grupo vecinal o asociación de vecinos?		
	73a.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	73a.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	73a.3. No <input type="checkbox"/> 73a.4. Si <input type="checkbox"/>
73b	Si está dispuesto a participar en algún grupo vecinal o asociación de vecinos, explique sus motivos:		

73e	Indique qué tipo de líderes hay en su comunidad:		
	73e.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	73e.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	73e.3. Sociales <input type="checkbox"/>
	73e.4. Políticos <input type="checkbox"/>	73e.5. Religiosos <input type="checkbox"/>	73e.6. Otro, especifique _____
74	¿Estaría interesado en participar en talleres de formación para mejorar la organización, participación y convivencia comunitaria?		
	74.1. N.A. <input type="checkbox"/>	74.2. No sabe <input type="checkbox"/>	74.3. Si <input type="checkbox"/> 74.4. No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Indique cuales: _____		

Appendix D. Semi-structured interview to facilitators of citizenship education workshops

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TO FACILITATORS OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION WORKSHOPS.

INTERVIEW 1

- 1. How has the group of facilitators of the program used Neuro-Linguistic Programming in designing and planning the psychosocial workshops and what innovations or changes have been done?**

En un primer momento, el diseño original del programa de capacitación psicosocial tuvo como base principal el aprendizaje dinámico acelerado, la psicología y la dinámica de grupos, con base en la programación neuro lingüística. La PNL se ha utilizado en el programa como una herramienta base muy importante, mas todo el programa no está basado en ella. Creo que sería importante incluir nuevos aspectos de la PNL al programa. Las modificaciones que se han venido realizando al programa, han dependido en gran parte del facilitador, pues cada uno tiene un estilo propio, el cual sirve de gran aporte para cada grupo y comunidad específica.

Initially, the original design of the psychosocial training program had, as main basis, the rapid dynamic learning, the psychology and the dynamics of groups, based on the Neuro-linguistic programming. The NLP has been applied in the program as a very important base tool, but not all the program is based on it. I think it is important to include new elements of the NLP to the program. The modifications that we have done have depended on the facilitator in a larger extent, because each one of us has his own style, which contributes to each specific group and community.

- 2. Was there any innovation in the approach offered by Neuro-Linguistic Programming based on the specific application in the program? Why?**

Los ejercicios fueron adaptados al contexto, es decir, al área psicosocial y las comunidades. Las innovaciones han dependido también del crecimiento y desarrollo profesional y personal del facilitador, del contexto y de las herramientas que se escojan para ser aplicadas al grupo. Más, desde la creación del programa no se ha realizado formalmente ninguna inclusión de contenidos específicos, que sean para ser aplicados en un lenguaje unificado por todos los facilitadores.

The exercises were adapted to the context, I mean, the psychosocial area and the communities. The innovations have depended also on the maturity and professional and personnel development of the facilitator, the context and the tools that are chosen and used by the group. Moreover, since the creation of the program, no specific contents have been formally included, to be applied by the facilitators using a unified language.

3. What have you personally learned from this application?

Esta fue hace algunos años mi primera experiencia con la comunidad, he aprendido infinitamente muchas cosas importantes: manejo de grupos, trabajo en equipo, abundancia, perdón, y amor, entre otras muy importantes también.

My first experience with a community was a few years ago. I have infinitely learned many important things: the management of groups, teamwork, abundance, forgiveness, and love, among others that are also very important.

4. What are your reflections from the preparation and implementation of the psychosocial workshops?

He reflexionado acerca de lo importante que es el programa de Ciudadanía Plena en todos sus aspectos y la necesidad de su adaptación al nuevo contexto al cual nos encontramos. Ya es tiempo que el programa se desarrolle y se extienda.

I have reflected on the importance of the Full Citizenship program in all its aspects and the need to adapt it to the new context where we are. It is time already that the program develops and expands.

5. Do you think the application of the methodology in the psychosocial workshops should be different in each community? Why?

Si, bueno, debe tenerse siempre una base ya estructurada, mas según el diagnóstico inicial con el grupo, encontramos que debe adaptarse ese contenido u otro que sea necesario al grupo a través de las herramientas y estrategias mas adecuadas para cada experiencia de aprendizaje.

Well, Yes, we should always have a structured base, but according to the initial group self-assessment, we found that this or other necessary content should be adapted to the group by using the most adequate tools and strategies for each learning experience.

6. Do you think that the role of the facilitator has contributed to a change of attitudes and beliefs among participants?

Indiscutiblemente si. He visto infinidad de cambios en muchos aspectos y contextos de la vida de los participantes, lo cual ha mejorado notablemente sus vidas en muchas formas.

Certainly yes; I have seen infinity of changes in many aspects and contexts of life in participants, which have improved notably their lives in many ways.

7. What values has the psychosocial education emphasized on?

Ha enfatizado la responsabilidad, la abundancia, la ciudadanía plena, la tolerancia, la comunicación, el trabajo en equipo, entre muchos otros.

tolerance, the communication, the teamwork, among many others.

It has emphasized the responsibility, the abundance, the full citizenship, the

8. To what extent do you think that the learning and the experience during workshops have transcended the beneficiaries?

Han trascendido de muchas maneras, y esto puede resumirse en la efectividad y éxito en las siguientes relaciones: la relación conmigo mismo y con la abundancia; mi relación con mi familia (pareja, hijos, padres y parientes); mi relación con la comunidad y con la sociedad.

They have transcended in many ways, and this can be summarized in the effectiveness and success of the following statements: the relationship with myself and with the abundance; my relationship with my family (partner, children, parents and other relatives); my relationship with the community, and with society.

9. Have you noticed any changes among participants after the learning process?

Sí, he notado muchos, y de muchas formas.

Yes, I have noticed many, and in many ways.

10. If the answer is affirmative, what barriers, beliefs, or attitudes that have affected this change have you been able to identify?

La conciencia y las creencias en la pobreza y la escasez, la enfermedad, la muerte, el dolor y el sufrimiento, la culpa, y la no responsabilidad de lo que me sucede en mi vida.

The conscience and the beliefs tied to poverty and scarcity, the illness, the death, the pain and the suffering, the fault, and the irresponsibility of what happens to me in my life.

11. How has the program team benefited from the training in Neuro-Linguistic Programming?

Respecto a los procesos, han sido satisfactorios, pues lo que el facilitador enseña lo aprende el mismo individualmente también, y la PNL es una herramienta eficaz para el cambio de creencias y para el éxito y la excelencia personal. Entre las muchas sugerencias en este momento puedo mencionar las siguientes:

Concerning the processes, they have been satisfactory, because while the facilitator teaches, he also learns it in the same way, and the NLP is an efficient tool for the transformation of beliefs and for the success and the personal excellence. Among the many suggestions right now I can mention the following:

Creo que se debe hacer una revisión total del programa en todos sus aspectos, lo cual ya se inició y he visto resultados muy positivos, para establecer una estructura organizacional bien definida del SAMI, incluyendo procesos y cargos, entre otros, de los integrantes del equipo de Ciudadanía Plena.

También se debe revisar del programa de educación psicosocial para la implementación de nuevos contenidos acordados por todos. Hay que mantener el seguimiento al proceso de los grupos mancomunados y a los resultados obtenidos en el área humana y económica una vez finalizada la etapa psicosocial y la entrega de los microcréditos. Elsie ya propuso la creación de grupos de apoyo que fueran liderados por facilitadores en las comunidades, pero aún no ha comenzado, debería arrancar pronto. Se podrían establecer estrategias eficaces para el cumplimiento de acuerdos de pago y responsabilidad para el manejo de la mora y su disminución. Aún debe haber muchas cosas que recomendar, más para cualquier asesoría, apoyo, o ayuda que necesite Ciudadanía plena o Hábitat Luz, estoy a su servicio completamente.

I believe we should do a total assessment of the program in all its aspects, which has already been initiated and I have seen very positive results, to establish a well defined organizational structure in the SAMI, including processes and tasks, among others issues, that concern to the team of Ciudadanía Plena.

The psychosocial education program should be reviewed to implement new contents, after we all have agreed. We must maintain the monitoring of the solidarity group process and the economic and social outcomes once the psychosocial phase and the delivery of micro-credits have ended. Elsie already proposed the creation of communities support groups that are headed by the facilitators, but it has not begun. It should start soon. The program could implement efficient strategies for the compliance of payment agreement and the management and reduction of debts. I can recommend other things. I am here at your service for any advising, support, or help that Ciudadanía Plena or HABITAT-LUZ may need.

INTERVIEW 2

- 1. How has the group of facilitators of the program used Neuro-Linguistic Programming in designing and planning the psychosocial workshops and what innovations or changes have been done?**

El diseño está basado en la pirámide propuesta por Dietlz (espiritualidad, identidad, valores y creencias, habilidades y capacidades, comportamiento y conducta y ambiente). Se espera que ocurran cambios de arriba hacia abajo en la pirámide. Se trabaja en los primeros cuatro niveles y esperando impactar en los dos últimos niveles. La capacidad técnica también contribuye con el nivel de habilidades y capacidades. No es espiritualidad basada en la religión sino en la persona. ¿Cuál es mi propósito? ¿Para qué estoy yo acá? Estas son preguntas claves. Se trabaja sobre la identidad y las creencias, lo que garantiza cambios en el ambiente.

The design is based on the pyramid proposed by Dietlz (spirituality, identity, values and beliefs, abilities and capacities, behavior and conduct, and the environment). It is expected that changes occur from the top to the bottom of the pyramid. We work in the first four levels expecting to impact in the two last levels. The technical capability also contributes with the level of abilities and capacities. The spirituality is not based on religion but on the individual. What is my purpose? Why am I here? These are key questions. The work focuses on the identity and the beliefs, which guarantees changes in the environment.

- 2. Was there any innovation in the approach offered by Neuro-Linguistic Programming based on the specific application in the program? Why?**

Desde 2004, cuando realice un curso sobre este tema, he introducido el componente de grupo de apoyo o grupo psicoterapéutico, con la esperanza de generar procesos de transformación partiendo para ello de un grupo de encuentro. En el grupo general, se busca propiciar un clima de confianza y que haya apertura al inicio del taller. Como pautas de proceso de grupo se pretende sanar juntos, llegar a acuerdos y principios juntos.

Since 2004, when I first attended training on this theme, I have introduced the support group component or psychotherapeutic group, with the hope to generate processes of transformation using the principles of group of encounter. In the general assembly, we attempt to establish a climate of confidence and rapport at the beginning of the workshop. As a guideline for group processes we try to heal together, to arrive at agreements and principles together.

A donde se quiere ir con todo esto en cada comunidad es a que haya un grupo de apoyo. Sería la misma comunidad en un proceso de transferencia de conocimiento.

También hemos introducido a “Dios” en algunos casos, no desde la religión sino como fuerza que nos guía más allá de la conciencia. Nosotros no estamos separados de esto. Se aborda desde el nivel 1 de la espiritualidad. Ha habido rechazo y hasta miedo cuando se menciona a Dios. También hemos incluido “Milagros” a través de mensajes y frases motivadoras. Se han dado hasta procesos de curación cuando el grupo lo ha permitido. “¿nos vamos ya? Quisiera que continuara”. “En el encuentro es que veo yo la clave del éxito, como facilitadores, propiciamos el encuentro”. Las personas me dicen que ahora tengo más amigos, al plantear una situación, al sentir la ayuda. Introduce la “Percepción Unitaria” o “Estado de Alerta”. Significa percibir todo lo perceptible al mismo tiempo sin esfuerzo y sin expectativas.

Un tapicero con discapacidad dijo haberse curado en tres semanas”. El nivel de instrucción de los asistentes no permite introducir teoría. PNL invita a estar activo en todos los sentidos. Al parar el pensamiento pasado y futuro, emergen los pensamientos de este instante. También he incluido la noción de “Aprendiendo a ser”, de Carlos y Margot Medina y ahora estoy incluyendo películas en los talleres. El secreto para hacer esto es que debe ser en español y no en otro idioma con subtítulos, por problemas de lectura del tipo de grupo.

An upholsterer with disability said to have been cured in three weeks. The level of instruction of participants does not allow introducing theory. NLP

Where we want to go with all this is to have a support group in each community. It would be the same community in a knowledge transfer process.

We have introduced "God" in some cases, not from a religion perspective but as a force that guides us beyond the conscience. We are not separated from this. It is undertaken since the first level about the spirituality. I have seen people rejecting God or even scared when he is mentioned. In addition, we have included "Miracles" through messages and motivating phrases. There have been some healing processes when the group has permitted it. "Are we leaving already? I would like to continue". In the encounter, it is where I see the key to success. As facilitators, we promote the encounter. People say to me that now they have more friends, expressing a situation, when feeling the aid. I introduced the "Unit Perception" or "State of Alert". It means perceiving all the perceptible things at the same time without effort and without expectations.

invites to have all our senses active. Stopping the future and passed thoughts, the thoughts of this instant emerge. I have also included Carlos and Margot Medina's notion of "Learning to be", and now I play movies in the workshops. The secret to do this is that it must be in Spanish and not in another language with subtitles, because of the reading problems in this type of group.

hacia la Victoria” de corte cristiano, pero reflexionamos acerca de su mensaje.

The movie that I use handles exactly the principles of NLP and the perception. We have recently used the movie "Facing the Giants", a Christian faith-filled motion picture, but we reflect about its message.

La película que utilizo maneja exactamente los principios de PNL y la captación. También hemos usado recientemente la película “Gigantes

3. What have you personally learned from this application?

Trabajando yo misma, he aprendido sobre la abundancia y la prosperidad.

Working myself, I have learned about abundance and prosperity.

4. What are your reflections from the preparation and implementation of the psychosocial workshops?

A veces me sorprende como la gente con 300 mil Bolívares, esto dicho por una señora, puede hacer un negocio y yo puedo hacer con ese monto muchas cosas”. Hacer dinero no tiene que ver con el grado de instrucción sino con la aptitud. Dar talleres a las comunidades me agrada más que darlos a gerentes, porque la gente desde la humildad y la sencillez capta y llega a aprender. Los gerentes llegan con su etiqueta de “gerente” a evaluar. Valoro más su facilidad para dar. En una ocasión los asistentes, eran 17 Participantes, recaudaron 600 mil Bolívares para ayudar a la persona más anciana del grupo con un hijo inválido, a comprar un refrigerador. Un taxista dio 100 mil Bolívares. Otro también lo hizo. Esto creo que pasa porque esto es un aprendizaje. Nosotros no vamos a enseñar, tienes la premisa de igualmente aprender. Aquel quien enseña también aprende.

At times I am surprised to see how people, with 300 thousand Bolivars, this said by a woman, “can do a business, and I can do many things with that total”. Making money does not have to do with the level of instruction but with the aptitude. Facilitating workshops to the communities pleases me more than giving them to managers, because this people come and learn with humility and simplicity. The managers arrive with their label of "manager" to evaluate. I value more their facility to give. In one occasion, the assistants, 17 participants, collected 600 thousand Bolivars to help the oldest woman in the group with a handicap son, to buy a refrigerator. A cabdriver gave 100 thousand Bolivars. Another person did the same. I believe that that happens because this is learning. We are not going to teach, we have the premise that we learn as well. The one who teaches learns.

5. Do you think the application of the methodology in the psychosocial workshops should be different in each community? Why?

Pudimos hacer una programación planificada. Existe un objetivo que se debe mantener.

We could have a planned program. There is an objective that should be kept.

El medio, la estrategia y las actividades son flexibles en función del grupo.

Además yo particularmente puedo probar como funciona una estrategia para ver la reacción que genera.

The means, the strategy and the activities are flexible in relation to the group. Besides, I particularly can test how a strategy functions in order to see the reaction that it generates.

6. Do you think that the role of the facilitator has contributed to a change of attitudes and beliefs among participants?

Si. Es un rol activo. En la interacción del facilitador con el grupo, hay cambios en ambas partes. Esto siempre ocurre.

Yes, it is an active role. In the interaction of the facilitator with the group, there are changes in both parts. This always occurs.

7. What values has the psychosocial education emphasized on?

Responsabilidad: asumir lo que me sucede en un cien por ciento; hacerme cargo de lo que me sucede, Confianza, Colaboración, Cooperación, Éxito, No conformarse, puedo tener otras cosas, no tener límites. Mil Bolívaes es, para muchos, lo más que aspiran. A ellos les alcanza, a mí no. La visión que ellos tienen es “pasar de rancho a casa con bloques sin friso”, nada más.

Responsibility: to assume what happens to me in a hundred percent; to take care of what happens to me, confidence, collaboration, cooperation, success, not to be satisfied, I can have other things, not to have limits. A thousand Bolívaes is, for many, what they hope. They can live with that, not me. The vision that they have is “to move from a rancho to a house with unfinished walls (only blocks)”, just that.

8. To what extend do you think that the learning and the experience during workshops have transcended the beneficiaries?

Una señora descubrió el grado de desorden que tenía en su casa. Ahora se dio cuenta porque su hija se enfadaba tanto. Hay gente que decía mejorar la relación con su esposa e hijos y luego lo comentan en público; la actividad “valorando mi riqueza” se pide que lo hagan en familia. En otra situación, un señor conversador invito a su señora a hacer los talleres. Ella asistió a otro módulo como tres meses después.

A woman discovered the degree of disorder that she had in her home. Now she realizes why her daughter was so much annoyed. There are people who said to improve the relationship with their partner and children and then they talked about it in public; the activity “valuing my wealth” must be done with the family. In another case, one talkative man invited her wife to attend the workshops. She attended another module three months later.

9. Have you noticed any changes among participants after the learning process?

Sí.

Ye, I have.

10. If the answer is affirmative, what barriers, beliefs, or attitudes that have affected this change have you been able to identify?

Falla el proceso de promoción. En vez de la promoción hay que dar un taller. Veo un 50% de deserción según las listas de asistencia que recibo. Del primero al último taller quedan de 20 – 17 asistentes. Hay que generar más compromiso. La gente dice que va y no aparece “La Clave del Éxito”. Es el poder de convocatoria. No identifican un nombre para todo el proceso. La formación Psicosocial es muy técnica. Cuesta mucho reunir al equipo de facilitadores. Llegamos hasta el módulo tres en la actualización de los programas; pero no hay liderazgo, muy ocupados y es difícil asumir la responsabilidad por las múltiples ocupaciones. El SAMI cumple con un objetivo financiero.

The stage of promotion fails. Instead of the promotion, one must give a workshop. I see a 50 percent of desertion according to the lists of assistance that I receive. From the first to the last workshop, from 17 to 20 assistants complete the module. One must generate more commitment. People say that they go and "The Key to Success" does not appear. The issue is the power to assemble. They do not identify a name for all the process. The psychosocial education is very technical. Moreover, it costs a lot to gather the team of facilitators. We evaluated and updated up to module three. However, there is not leadership. We are very busy and have multiple occupations. It is difficult to assume the responsibility. The SAMI complies with a financial objective.

11. How has the program team benefited from the training in Neuro-Linguistic Programming?

No hay suficiente confianza y apertura para decir las cosas en público. Lo que sienten, lo que piensan. Si hay cambios, pero la conversación en los talleres es transversal, es decir, al que tengo al lado. Debemos profundizar el seguimiento y el liderazgo.

There is not enough confidence and opening to say the things in public; what they feel, what they think. There are changes, but the conversation in the workshops is sideways, that is to say, with the one I have to my side. We should deepen the monitoring and the leadership.

INTERVIEW 3

1. How has the group of facilitators of the program used Neuro-Linguistic Programming in designing and planning the psychosocial workshops and what innovations or changes have been done?

Los talleres están organizados en tres sesiones de cuatro horas cada uno porque hemos tenido la necesidad de disminuir el número de horas de capacitación. Hay una ventaja con no dictarlo en la comunidad porque la gente va y se tiene que quedar. Si se hacen en la comunidad están cerca de sus casas, dicen que se van porque llega el esposo... buscan excusas, entraban y salían, amén de la inseguridad. En una ocasión, al tercer día que llegué se me acercó una señora que estaba participando, esposa de un malandro, y me dijo: váyase porque los malandros están alzados. A dos asesores los han atracado. La misma comunidad me protege. En la primera sesión, abordamos lo que son valores, creencias, conductas enfocadas a la comunidad. Establecemos la normativa y los principios que fundamentan el taller: no criticar, confidencialidad, comprometerse a participar- desde un enfoque espiritual que cambia las personas. En el taller dos, abordamos el cambio de creencias. Aquí el participante se da cuenta de creencias, que son limitaciones, que lo afectan para alcanzar las metas. Se usa el PNL que es una estrategia muy poderosa que permite cambio.

The workshops are organized in three four-hour sessions because we have had the need to reduce the number of training hours. There is an advantage when the workshop is not offered in the community because people go and have no excuse to leave. If these are held in the community, they are near to their homes, and they say that they have to leave because the husband arrives... they look for excuses, they come and they leave, and the insecurity contributes. In one occasion, in the third session, one participant approached me. She was the wife of a malandro (thief), and she asked me to leave because the malandros (thieves) were around and I was in danger. Two economic advisors have been robbed. But the same community protects me. In the first session, we undertake what values and beliefs are, and the proper conduct in the community. We establish the conditions and the principles that guide the workshop: not to criticize, confidentiality, to be committed to participate- from a spiritual point of view that changes the people. In the second workshop, we undertake the change of beliefs. Here the participant recognizes the beliefs that are limitations, which can affect their goals. The NLP is used as a very powerful strategy that seeks change.

Con el cambio de creencia de lo espiritual a lo material experimentan una visión más amplia del rol en su comunidad. En este último taller, dos personas se me acercaron y me pidieron bajar los talleres a los Consejos Comunales de la comunidad.

En el taller tres, se maneja todo lo que es la parte de estrategias para alcanzar el cambio. Se utilizan dos estrategias. La primera es el uso del video "El Secreto". La segunda estrategia, cuando no hay como pasar el video, es utilizar "Las siete leyes espirituales para el éxito" de Deepak Chopra; fundamentalmente es eso.

En la PNL hay una parte que involucra al individuo con su entorno. En lo que se llama la alineación: yo, individuo, en mi contexto físico, como me percibo en el grupo familiar, en la comunidad, la sociedad, el universo. Eso fue un aporte de Dieltz con el PNL. Es más, está involucrado más en la práctica que en la teoría. El nivel de instrucción que manejamos no facilita la inducción de componentes teóricos. En algunos casos, no saben leer ni escribir. En la práctica, el ejercicio es algo que ellos pueden vivir, que tengan resultados en el momento.

From the spiritual to material change of belief they experience a more comprehensive vision of their role in their community. In this last workshop, two persons approached me once to ask if it was possible to offer the workshops to the Communal Councils.

In workshop number three, we introduce the strategies to accomplish change. Two strategies are utilized. The first one is the use of the movie "The Secret". The second strategy, when there is no video player available, is the use of Deepak Chopra's "The seven spiritual laws of success". Basically that's it.

In NLP there is a part that relates the individual with the environment, in what is called the alignment: I, as individual, in my physical context, how I perceive myself in the family group, in the community, in the society, in the universe. That was Dieltz's contribution with the NLP. Moreover, it is more involved with the practice than with the theory. The levels of instruction that we deal with do not facilitate the introduction of theoretical components. In some cases, they do not know how to read or write. In the practice, the exercise is something that can be experienced, and have immediate results.

2. Was there any innovation in the approach offered by Neuro-Linguistic Programming based on the specific application in the program? Why?

El facilitador tiene la capacidad para cambiar en el momento. A veces, tengo que cambiar la estrategia según el grupo. Por ejemplo, los evangélicos a veces no están de acuerdo con los contenidos y la forma de llevar la práctica, por creencias de tipo religiosos.

The facilitator has the capacity to change at that moment. At times, I have had to change the strategy depending on the group. For example, sometimes the evangelicals do not agree with the contents and the ways to carry out the practice, based on their religious beliefs.

En general, uno debe de tener la estrategia, a veces por el grupo, o por el espacio que se dispone para hacer la actividad. Hubo un caso específico en una iglesia católica. Había una señora. Ella hizo un ejercicio que yo les hago hacer de volver atrás en su vida y nosotros la traemos para adelante. Esa señora revivió la muerte de su madre. Entonces dejé el grupo para trabajar con ella un rato. Le pedía las personas que me apoyaran y me esperaron. Eso me ha pasado dos veces. A veces puedes involucrar al grupo o no. Eso significa no terminar el taller. Tal vez si tuviera un cofacilitador. Una de las ideas buenas de Elsie fue que hiciéramos el curso de psicoterapia, el cual todos hicimos. ¿Valió la pena el esfuerzo? Si, para atender las comunidades en ese aspecto. Por esto no nos paga nadie, lo hago una vez a la semana, sin cobrar. Tiene que ser una persona capacitada en PNL.

In general, one should have the strategy, sometimes for the type of group, or for the space that is arranged to do the activity. There was a specific case in one Catholic Church. There was one woman who did an exercise that I made them do in which they went back in their life and then I guided them to the present. That woman evoked her mother's death. Then I left the group to work with her a while. I asked the group to support me and they waited for us. That has happened to me twice. Sometimes you can get involved with the group or not. That means not finishing the workshop on time. Perhaps, if I had a co-facilitator. One of Elsie's good ideas was that we took the course on psychotherapy, which all did. Was the effort worth? Yes it was, in order to attend the communities in that aspect. Nobody pays us for doing that; I do it once a week, without charging. It has to be done by a person trained in NLP.

3. What have you personally learned from this application?

Yo te puedo contar. Desde la década de 1970, estoy trabajando en las comunidades. Trabajé primero con los Yukpas en la sierra. Cuando a mi me sacan por problemas en la Misión (Católica), ya ellos iban a abrir cuentas de ahorro porque ellos iban a construir sus propias casas. También iban a construir un puente y a comercializar sus productos apoyados por el Ministerio de Agricultura y Cría. Después de allí me cambiaron para la Villa. Querían que trabajara con jóvenes. Ellos crearon un club juvenil. De ser tirapiedras, bebedores, de ensuciar la plaza, ellos hicieron muchos cambios y volvieron a clase.

Let me tell you a history. Since the 1970s, I have been working in the communities. I first worked with the Yukpas (indigenous group) in the mountains. When I was pushed out for problems in the Mission (catholic), they were ready to open savings accounts because they were going to build their own houses, a bridge and to market their products, supported by the Ministry of Agriculture. After that I was transferred to La Villa (nearby town). They wanted me to work with youngsters. They conformed a youth club. From throwing stones, drinking, and dirtying the square, they made many changes and went back to study.

En los 1990 trabajé en el INCE rescatando jóvenes desertores y reinsertándolos. En el 2000, con los damnificados de Vargas aquí en la región. En este programa ha sido diferente. Me ha podido confirmar la capacidad que tienen las comunidades de ser sus propios gestores de su cambio de vida, tanto individual como comunitario. Es una confirmación de lo que ya antes hacía, pero ahora con nuevos conocimientos que facilitan el trabajo. Ha fortalecido la capacidad de este tipo de trabajo.

In the 1990s, I worked for INCE rescuing teenagers who had quitted studying and reintegrating them to society. In 2000, I worked with the victims of the flood who were relocated in the region. In this program (CP) it has been different. I have been able to confirm the capacity that communities have to be their own agents of change, individual as well as collective. It is a confirmation of what I already knew, but now with more knowledge, which facilitates the work. It has strengthened the capacity in this type of work.

4. What are your reflections from the preparation and implementation of the psychosocial workshops?

Con el cambio que se ha hecho ahora por exigencias del Sami hemos tenido que omitir algunos elementos importantes para lograr el cambio. Lo tomamos como un reto. Todos somos egresados de la especialidad de dinámicas en grupo. Tenía que ser algo con toda la perspectiva profesional del caso.

With the change that has been done, mandated by the Sami, we have had to omit some important elements to accomplish change. We followed that order as a challenge. We are all specialist in group dynamics. It had to be something done with all the professional perspective of the case.

5. Do you think the application of the methodology in the psychosocial workshops should be different in each community? Why?

Debe existir un programa guía, pero el programa, el facilitador debe tener la capacidad de adaptar el contenido del programa a cada grupo en particular, no a cada comunidad; porque una misma comunidad, cada grupo, es individual. Cuando el grupo ya tiene cuatro horas, empieza a adoptar una personalidad propia como grupo. Esa es una de las razones por las que generalmente no acepto gente nueva que se incorpora en el segundo taller. Te cuento que en un grupo entre 20 y 25 personas, el grupo, por solidaridad con una compañera pidió que la incorporara.

We should have a program guide, but the facilitator should have the capacity to adapt the content of the program to each particular group, not to each community; because in a same community, each group is different. When the session already has four hours, the group begins to adopt its own personality as group. That is one of the reasons. I generally do not accept that new participants begin in the second workshop. Let me tell you a history; in a group, between 20 and 25 people, the group, asked me to include a friend of theirs for solidarity.

Entonces, en vez de cuatro horas, damos cinco ¿Por qué? Le pido a la persona lleve el material, que lo lea y que llegue y lo interprete a ver si corresponde a las conclusiones del grupo. La señora empezó a hablar y el mismo grupo empezó un nuevo debate. Se atrasó pero la gente aceptó y el taller se extendió. La gente aceptó.

Then, instead of four hours, we gave five ¿Why? I ask the person to take the material home to read and interpret it to see if it corresponds to the conclusions of the group. This person began to speak and the group began a new debate. It delayed the workshop but they accepted and the workshop was longer than usual. However, People accepted.

6. Do you think that the role of the facilitator has contributed to a change of attitudes and beliefs among participants?

Si, definitivamente. Primero por los resultados inmediatos de cada taller. Luego, al tiempo, me he encontrado a personas que me han dicho que han tenido cambios en la casa, con la familia, o en sus negocios. Como que han logrado ampliar el negocio, tienen más ingresos, que llevan una mejor relación con el esposo o la esposa y los hijos. Al principio del taller, el primer día de trabajo, vez una forma de comportamiento. Al final, ves la forma de dirigirse a las personas, la forma de articular y de entonación, los vez más relajados. Ya en la tercera sesión dicen que manifiestan cambios de actitud con los hijos. Yo acostumbro al final de cada sesión unos treinta minutos para hacer una evaluación y al final del ciclo, ellos hacen una reflexión de algunos cambios en el grupo.

Definitely, yes; first, because of the immediate results of each workshop. Then, later, I have found people who have said to me that they have experienced changes at home, with the family, or in their businesses. It seems that they have managed to expand the business, have more incomes, and have a better relationship with the husband or wife and the children. At the beginning of the workshop, the first day of work, I see a kind of behavior. At the end, I see how people approach each other, and how they articulate the speech and the intonation, in a more relaxed way. Already in the third session, they say that they experience changes of attitude toward their children. At the end of each session, I use some thirty minutes to do an evaluation and, at the end of the cycle, they reflect on some changes and share them with the group.

La gente que va a hablar de política, a empezar la guerra se da cuenta que son temas espirituales. Cuando ellos empiezan a ver que no es eso, no duran y se van ya que no buscaban el crédito sino boicotear la actividad. Solo han sido dos casos aislados, porque el mismo grupo los ignoró y se dan cuenta que es un tema distinto.

People that go to speak about politics in order to start a confrontation, soon realize that these are spiritual themes. When they begin to see that it is not political, they leave. They were not looking for a credit, but to boycott the activity. There have been two isolated cases, but the same group ignored them and recognized that it was a different theme.

Son temas espirituales y al final todos se encuentran agradecidos con la alcaldía, el sami y el facilitador.

These are spiritual themes and, at the end, they thank the Municipality, the Sami and the facilitator.

7. What values has the psychosocial education emphasized on?

Son el respeto, la solidaridad, el trabajo individual y en grupo comunitario, la confianza en sí mismo, la confianza en el otro. Eso es abierto. Uno orienta pero ellas van dando la tónica para reforzar esos principios utilizamos PNL para que se fijen en el cerebro. En el primer taller, se busca que ellos los expresen; con una pregunta sobre los valores necesita una persona. Confunden un valor con una conducta, con una creencia o un sentimiento. En la medida que ellos van expresando uno los orienta y va definiendo la diferencia. Es una discusión abierta. No somos profesionales; somos facilitadores. Cada participante es un maestro y un aprendiz y el profesor es otro aprendiz y otro maestro. Uno debe orientar, no convertirse en el sabelotodo. Además estamos trabajando con adultos con experiencias y vivencias. Se debe extraer esa experiencia y que sirva de aprendizaje para todo el grupo.

They are the respect, the solidarity, the individual work and in the community as a group, the self-confidence, the confidence in the other. That is open. I guide them to strengthen these principles using NLP so that they keep them in their minds. In the first workshop, we encourage them to express their values; using one question to identify the values a person may need. They confuse a value with a conduct, a belief or a feeling. As long as they express them, I guide them and establish the difference. It is an open discussion. We are not professionals; we are facilitators. Each participant is a teacher and an apprentice and the professor is another apprentice and another teacher. One should facilitate, and not become the know-it-all. Besides, we are working with adults with experiences. These experiences must be extracted. They can contribute to the group learning process.

8. To what extent do you think that the learning and the experience during workshops have transcended the beneficiaries?

Ya hablamos de los cambios inmediatos que se notan al final de los talleres y los cambios que expresan en sus casas, sus familias y sus trabajos.

We already spoke about the immediate changes that I notice at the end of the workshops and the changes in the household, the family and the workplace that people express.

9. Have you noticed any changes among participants after the learning process?

Si. Ya hemos hablado de eso.

Yes, we have talked about that already.

10. If the answer is affirmative, what barriers, beliefs, or attitudes that have affected this change have you been able to identify?

La barrera más importante es la creencia de que “yo no puedo”, “yo vengo para que me ayuden porque estoy incapacitado”. Es la creencia de su incapacidad para su propio cambio. La segunda barrera es la parte política, aunque es poco. También está lo religioso en algunos casos, pero si se da. Por ejemplo, en la parte de los evangélicos hay muchas corrientes ideológicas. Si el dirigente es muy cerrado la persona llega con esa barrera. Pero se ha logrado que se den cuenta que el problema no es el taller sino por la actitud del líder que ellos tienen.

También creo que cuando se trabaja con muchas personas en un taller, este no llega a la audiencia, al menos en cifras absolutas. Los resultados se vienen abajo. Un número de participantes debe ser entre 20 y 25, máximo 30 ya son muchos. Con los indígenas también es difícil porque usan la lengua como una defensa para no comunicarse conmigo. He llevado a un traductor y allí entonces todos si hablan español.

The most important barrier is the beliefs that "I am not capable", or "I come so that they help me because I am incapacitated". It is the belief of being incapable of accomplishing change. The second barrier is the political context, although it is small. In addition, there is the religion in some cases, but it happens. For example, in the evangelical church there are many ideological branches. If the leader is a closed mind person, the follower arrives with that same barrier. However, I have been able to make them realize that the problem is not the workshop but the attitude of their leader.

I also believe that when I work with many people in one workshop, I do not reach the audience, at least in absolute figures. The results go downhill. A number of participants should be no more than 20 to 25. 30 attendants are too many. With the indigenous people is also difficult because they use their language as a defense to avoid communicating with me. I have brought a translator and then I have found out that they all speak Spanish.

11. How has the program team benefited from the training in Neuro-Linguistic Programming?

Ellos no han tenido capacitación en cuanto a trabajo social. Esa es mi percepción. Eso hace que ellos se enfoquen a la parte económica y no al cambio social. Puedes entregar 1000 créditos sin lograr cambio social. El programa así no cumple su función.

They have not being trained as social workers. That is my perception. That makes them focus on the economic aspect but not on the social change. You can deliver a thousand credits without achieving social change. In that way, the program does not perform its function.

Hemos hecho hincapié a los asesores. Les hicimos ver que el crédito es importante, pero no es lo más importante. Si se acaba el dinero, se acaba el programa. Tal vez si los asesores económicos tuviesen esa formación, el trabajo de nosotros se vería reforzado en las comunidades. Reforzar esa parte es un trabajo continuo. En las comunidades hay dificultad para llegar a consenso; la gente piensa: "si la mayoría no está conmigo, entonces abandono el trabajo".

We have talked about this to the advisors. We made them understand that the credit is important, but it is not the most important thing. If the financial resources are over, then, the program ends. Perhaps if the economic advisors had that training, our work would probably be stronger in the communities. Strengthening that part is a continuous work. In the communities, it is difficult to arrive at consensus; people think: "If the majority is not with me, then I abandon the effort".

Appendix E. Semi-structured interview to beneficiaries of housing improvement loans

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TO BENEFICIARIES OF HOUSING IMPROVEMENT LOANS.

INTERVIEW 1 BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Para mí, hemos estado bastante contentos, porque he recibido muchas cosas personales. Ayuda mucho a crecer física moral y espiritualmente para mejorar mucho porque dan mucha formación para ser mejores ciudadanos.

For me we have been very happy because I have received many personal things. It helps a lot to grow physically, morally, and spiritually to improve a lot because they offer a lot of training to be better citizens.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

No recuerda. (se le recordó al final).

(The person does not recall the institutions. They were mentioned at the end of the interview).

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Si. Por ejemplo el haber hecho esta obra, y dentro de mi casa por ejemplo he tenido mucha ayuda con los talleres técnicos.

Yes. For example, by achieving the improvement and, with the house, I have had many help with the construction workshops.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Ellos dicen que están sorprendidos del cambio tan rápido de la vivienda y me apoyan.

They (relatives) say that they are surprised with the rapid change of the house and they support me.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Ellos me apoyan.

They are supportive.

- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
 La capacitación me ha ayudado a fortalecerme con mas fe, y todas las metas que me he propuesto se me han logrado, y espero que todas las que tengo en mente se me logren, y ayudaron mucho esas charlas y me han ayudados en lo material, es decir en mis ahorros.
The workshops have helped me to strengthen my faith, I have accomplished all the goals that I have proposed, and I expect to reach those that I have in mind. The workshops helped a lot, about saving.
- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**
 El ahorro, el compartir, que si uno piensa en una meta tiene que poner el esfuerzo y dedicación.
About saving, sharing, that if one thinks in one goal one has to put effort and dedication.
- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**
 No le quitaría nada porque es una buena enseñanza y buena formación.
I would not remove any thing because it is a good learning and a good training.
- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**
 Siempre he sido muy cooperativa y muy solidaria y eso me ayudo a tener mucho mas conocimiento, porque no solo es crecer yo sino hacer crecer a todos los que se acercan a mí, porque habemos muchas personas a mi alrededor que empezaron con mucho entusiasmo pero se fueron opacando pero a medida que yo estuve metida aquí yo les ayudo porque hay que ayudar a crecer a los demás. Nada hacemos con ir y no aplicar lo aprendido. Con los talleres he tenido más fortaleza y he podido hacerle sentir a aquel que está conmigo lo que uno siente. A mis hijos siempre he tenido la idea de ayudarlos. Con los vecinos les hago llegar una palabra, un concejo que uno en la vida no debe ser una persona temerosa, que uno debe expresar lo que siente para saber qué es lo que opina el otro de mí para uno corregir los errores.
I have always been very cooperative and supportive. That helped my to have a lot of knowledge, because not only I grow others that approach me too, because there are many people around me that began with a lot of enthusiasm but were uninspired but to the extent that I was here I helped them because one must help grow others. We do nothing if we go and do not implementing what we learned. With the workshops, I have had more strength and have been able let the person that is with me what I feel. Moreover, to my children, I always had the idea of helping them. With the neighbors, I bring them a word; the advice that one in the life should not be a fearful person, that one should express what feels to know what the other thinks about me so I can correct my mistakes.

Pertenezco a un grupo religioso para hacerles llegar a las personas esas palabras.

I belong to a religious group and we bring people those words.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Mi experiencia ha sido muy buena, porque he aprendido a compartir con ellos a ser solidaria con sus problemas, que todos tenemos problemas y uno debe compartir. Ellos tiene sus problemas y uno también tiene, lo que pasa es que algunos aprendemos a aceptarlos y Dios nos ayuda para ponerle trabajo para solucionarlos, y ellos también buscan la manera de salir de ellos pero no le ponen el mismo empeño.

My experience has been very good, because I have learned to share with them to be supportive with their problems, all of us have problems and one must share. they have their problems and either do I, what happens is that some learn to accept them and God helps us solve them, and they also seek the way to leave them but the do not put the same effort.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

La verdad es que yo pienso de esa manera, cuando me reúno con ellos les quito esa obstinación de no querer seguir creciendo, de estar opacados, y yo te digo que yo me siento que voy a salir rápido y quisiera que ello hicieran los mismo, oo hay un espíritu de superioridad, y eso no fue desde ahora fue desde el principio. Yo fui la que empuje a pensar que eso no es así sino que es diferente. En los talleres todo tenía que hacerlo yo, lo hacia con tal de ayudar los a ellos, pero yo se que sus problemas los han tenido un poco pesimistas. Seria muy bueno otro taller para cambiar esa forma de pensar. Sobre todo en los que están atrasados con personas que los ayuden capacitadas. Estoy interesada en que se les den a los que ya terminaron de pagar y a los que les falta poco la oportunidad de obtener otro crédito, porque uno no tiene la culpa de los problemas de otros.

The truth is that I think in that way, I when meet with them I remove that attitude of not wanting to grow, of being there gloomy, and I tell you that I, for example, feel that I am going to end fast and want them to do the same. What happens is that there is not a spirit of superiority, and that is not recent but since the beginning. I was the one that pushed to think that that was different. During the workshops I had to do every thing I, but I did it to help them, but I know that their problems have kept them a little pessimists. I wish we had another workshop to change that way of thinking. What I am interested in giving those that finished paying and those that are close to finish the opportunity to obtain another credit, because one is not responsible for the problems of others.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

Ha mejorado, lo único por los momentos que solucionen el problema de las cloacas que es lo que se necesita para uno tener su casa como debe ser.

It has improved; the only thing at this moment is that they solved the problem of the sewer, that it is what is needed to have a dwelling, as it should be.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Aquí se hacen reuniones, lo que pasa es que no es culpa de la presidenta, sino que ha habido inconvenientes con la alcaldía, y yo creo que eso va a ser hasta que termine la red que falta. He participado en esas reuniones.

Here we have meeting, what happens is that it is not the president's fault but the inconveniences at the municipality and I think that will persist until the sewer infrastructure is installed. I have attended those meetings.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Cuando hacen la reunión de ustedes si se suman, pero por los momentos no se han hecho más reuniones porque la actitud está más calmada ahora.

When your meetings are held, yes, they gather, but at this moment, no more meetings have been conducted because the attitude is calmer now.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Claro, porque al compartir con la comunidad la persona que está encargada está más comprometida a que se realicen los proyectos que se propongan.

Of course, because when one shares with the community the person that is in charged is more committed to carry on the projects that are proposed.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Si.

Yes, I do.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Como vocal. Ya no estoy porque esto ha cambiado mucho, cuando yo estaba, no sé si eran formas de ser o apatía siempre salían personas con peros. Es difícil prestarse a este tipo de carácter. Es como decir que si decide vivir en lo malo, vive en lo malo, pero si decides vivir en lo bueno, vive en lo bueno, entonces se veía que salían.

Only as a member. I am not active because this has changed a lot. When I was there, I do not know if it was the way of being or the apathy but people always complained. It is difficult with this kind of attitude. It is like if one person decides to live in bad conditions, lives like that, but if he decides to live in good conditions, then he does so.

Ya se formó una reunión para los vigilantes, pero el problema es el pago, y yo digo que el que tiene pague, y el que no tiene, que no pague, porque hay gente que no tiene por sus problemas económicos.

People do not want to pay for the local enforcement group. I say that if someone has money then he should pay, but if he does not then he should not, because there is people that can afford thing due to their economic condition.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

No responde aunque sí ha estado activa anteriormente.

The person does not respond, nevertheless, the person has been active before.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

Ya no quiero pasar por lo mismo de los odios y los rencores.

I do not want to go through the same about hates and resentments.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Ahora no.

Not now.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

La asociación de vecinos y la de deporte. Mi papa es el entrenador de un equipo y ahora unos jóvenes quieren formar una radio comunitaria, pasaron recogiendo firmas.

The neighborhood association and the sport group. My father is the trainer of one team and now some youngsters want to set up a community radio station. They came to collect signatures.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Si. Seguir adelante con mi meta de terminar de construir mi local para venta de comida para ayudar a mi familia.

Yes. To go ahead with my goal to finish the construction of my store to sell food and to help my family.

INTERVIEW 2

BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

A mí me ha ido bien. Ha mejorado la comunidad por todas las personas que han participado que se han beneficiado.

To me I have been well. The community has improved because all the people that have participated have benefited.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

No recuerda. (se le recordó al final).

(The person does not recall the institutions. They were mentioned at the end of the interview).

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Si. Anteriormente era un ranchito y por medio del préstamo fue construyendo, primero le sirvió para hacer el baño, el segundo para hacer los dos cuartos y vamos a seguir mejorándolo.

Yes. Before it was a little rancho and, by means of the credit, it was built up. First it helped to build the bathroom, a second credit helped to add the two bedrooms and we are going to continue improving it.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Todos estamos bien contentos con el cambio.

We are all very happy with the change.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Si ha servido. Aunque no logra especificar más detalles.

Yes, it has been useful (the person is not able to specify more details).

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Todo estuvo bien, no recuerda mucho.

Everything was fine, I do not recall much.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Recuerdo la charla de cómo queríamos el mejoramiento de la casa, como queríamos la casa y bueno, lo único que alcanzo fue para el baño.

I remember the presentation about the housing improvement that we all wanted, about how we wanted our houses and, well, it only covered the construction of the bathroom.

- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**

Nada. Los dejaría igual.

Nothing. I would keep them the same

- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**

Sigue la relación igual con los vecinos y la familia.

The relationship with the family and neighbors remains the same.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?**

Lo único es una sola persona que ha dejado de pagar en este último crédito, el crédito pasado todos pagaron bien, y en este últimos crédito solo falta una persona.

The only thing is one person that has stopped paying in this last credit. With the previous credit, everybody paid, but in this last one only one person failed.

- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**

A esa persona le pregunte pero dijo que ella tenía una situación que no podía pagar y que ella iba a ir a la alcaldía a hablar para ver lo que podía hacer, para ver si podía pagar 50.000 bolívares mensuales.

I asked that person but she said that she was confronting a situation that did not let her pay and that she was going to the municipality to find out what to do, to see if she could pay 50 thousand monthly.

- 2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?**

Por ahora lo que falta es la cloaca.

For now, we needs the sewer.

- 2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?**

Nada, eso lo hace la asociación de vecinos.

Nothing. That is done by the neighbors association.

- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**

Claro. (No sabe especificar porque).

Sure (The person cannot specify the reasons).

- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**

No quiero opinar. (Asumo que no sabe interpretar esta pregunta).

I do not want to give my opinion (I assume that the person does not know how to interpret the question).

- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**

No.

No, we do not.

- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
 Ninguna. *None.*
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 No aplica. *Does not apply.*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
 No me llevo bien con la presidenta de la asociación de vecinos. Pero si fuera otra persona posiblemente sí. *I do not get along with the president of the neighborhood association. Perhaps if it were another person, I would probably commit.*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
 No. *No, I am not.*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
 Los vigilantes que se están formando. *The community enforcement group that is being conformed.*
- 2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?**
 Claro. Porque ahora es que le falta a la casita mía, para seguirla mejorando. *Of course, because my house needs a lot more, to continue improving it.*

INTERVIEW 3

BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
De las experiencias que he tenido me ha gustado conocer gente nueva y tener un empujoncito más adelante, pero no me ha gustado porque ha sido en grupos, tendría más resultado si fuera individual.
From the experiences that I have had I liked to know new people and to move forward, but at the same time I have not liked because it has been in groups. It would have better results if it were in an individual basis.
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
Se del SAMI, LUZ, eran cuatro pero no recuerdo a otros.
I know Sami, the University. They were four but I do not recall the others.
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Tenemos pruebas de esta parte de la placa que eche, era de zinc y ahora de concreto, pero claro, tuve que completar con algo más de dinero para terminarlo todo.
I can show the construction of the roof. It was metal roofing and now it is concrete. I have to spend some extra money to finish it.
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Satisfactoriamente bien, no lo creía porque no creía que estas cosas se daban pero a raíz de eso he tenido más confianza en estas cosas.
Satisfactory. I could not believe it because I did not think these things could happen but after this I am more confident.
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
Yo era una de las que pensaba que no se daban estos créditos pero a la final se dio. A mi familia le he manifestado de los talleres bonitos que le concientizan a uno.
I was a person that though that these credits were unrealistic but it happened. I have told my family out the beautiful workshops that helped me.
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
Se concientiza uno con la parte del ahorro y la administración, no creía en los bancos pero ahora no vivo del día a día sino que me planifico.
Counciousness building about saving and household administration. I did not believe in banks but now I do not live in a daily basis but I plan.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Hubo un taller que al final decía que debemos mantenernos juntos porque así lográbamos las metas, si salimos del grupo podemos perder la meta.

I remember that there was a workshop that at the end (the facilitator) said that we had to remain together because in that way we could accomplish our goals, that if we leave our groups we could fail.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Al principio pensaba que eran muy largos y cansones y después pensé que si eran necesarios cumplir con ellos para recibir lo que uno quiere. Me gustaban los talleres de albañilería y quería que fueran más largos porque me gusta mucho esa parte.

At the beginning, I thought that they were too long and tedious but later I thought that it was necessary to attend to receive what we wanted. I liked the construction workshops and I wanted them to be longer.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Si. Aunque aquí siempre en la casa nos hemos llevado bien. Con los vecinos me parece que les molesta cuando ven que los demás están prosperando, ellos también lo pueden hacerlo pero no quieren, y le quieren bajar la autoestima pero no dejo que me afecte.

Yes, although in my house we have always got along very well. With the neighbors, it seems that it bothers them to see that other people are improving, they can do it too but they do not want, and they want to affect my self-esteem but I do not let it happen.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

De mi grupo no los conocía mucho pero a raíz de estos los he conocido un poco más.

About my group, I did not know them before, but after this, I have known them a little more.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Yo converso mucho con ellos porque me preocupa, pero hay una persona que no ha terminado de pagar, yo sí creo que pueda hacerlo pero está muy apática.

I chat a lot with them because I do care, but there is one person that has not finished paying back. I think that she can do it but she is very apathetic.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

El problema del desbordamiento de la cañada, porque hay personas que les llega el agua a la mitad de la casa. El asfaltado, no lo echaron como es pero solucionó el barrial que había. El otro problema es la vigilancia que está suspendida porque la gente no quiere pagar y los vigilantes no van a trabajar con tan poco pago.

A problem exists with the cañada that overflows, because there are persons that get a lot of water into their houses. The street pavement was improperly done but it solved the problem (mud). The other problem is the insecurity, because people do not want to pay to support the community enforcement group and they do not work.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Limpiamos la cañada para que corra el agua con más facilidad. Pero los vecinos no somos muy unidos, si hubiese mas unión funcionarían las cosas mejor.

We clean up the cañada to let the water flow more easily. However, we, the neighbors, are not very integrated. If there were more unity, things would work better.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Si. Pero siempre he tenido esa inquietud de trabajar por la comunidad.

Yes, but I have always had that restlessness about working for the community.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Si, aunque no especifica porque.

Yes (but the person does not specify the reasons).

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

No.

No, we do not.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Ninguna.

None.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

No participa.

The person does not participate.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

Bueno, porque en realidad no tengo tiempo.

Well, because in reality, I do not have the time.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Pero si es de reunirse a apoyar en algún problema si busco el tiempo y voy.

But if we need to gather and support in one problem, if find the time and I go.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

No. Pero deberían hacerlo para los muchachos que están tan.

Not. However, I should be informed for those youngsters that are in bad conditions.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Si. Porque creo que es un ayudita para poder adelantar más, yo me siento en la capacidad de poderlo hacer. Pero me gustaría estar sola, porque pensé que las personas eran responsables y luego no respondieron.

Yes, because I think that it is a little help to be able to advance. I feel I have the capacity to do it. However, I would like to be along, because I thought that the persons were responsible but later they did not respond properly.

INTERVIEW 4
BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Me gustó mucho porque hice algo con lo que me dieron, lo que quería. *I liked a lot because I did something with what they gave me, what I wanted.*
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
Tantas cosas que tiene uno en la mente que la verdad no recuerdo. *So many things that one has in mind that, in fact, I do not remember.*
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Sí. Bueno, los bahareques ya que he tenido muchos problemas con los vecinos y por protección. *Yes, well, I built up the exterior walls because I have had many problems with my neighbors and for security reasons.*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Bueno opino muchas cosas buenas porque muchos han venido a preguntarme, pero lo malo es que viven en otros barrios (Barrio Zulia próximo a la comunidad), y por aquí otra señora también me dijo. Dos vecinas me han mandado a decir pero no sé porque XX (Asesora del barrio) no ha venido. A mi familia le parece bien. *Well, I can say many good things because many people have come to ask me about the program, but the problem is that they live in other barrios. Two of my neighbors asked me why the economic advisor has not come to the barrio. My family thinks it is good.*
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
Sí en muchos aspectos, pero no recuerdo. *Yes, in many aspects but I do not remember*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
Bien, tengo la memoria un poco olvidadiza. Recuerdo los juegos. Por ahí tenía una cartulina qué pintamos, como era para el mejoramiento de la vivienda lo tengo guardado. *Good, I do not have a good memory. I remember the games. Somewhere I have a drawing I did. I still have it because it was about how we wanted to improve our house.*

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

No responde (No recuerda).

The person does not remember (does not answer.)

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

(Nada a pesar que no recuerda en la pregunta anterior).

(Nothing even though the person does not answer the previous question).

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Con los vecinos me he comunicado más, con la familia mejor todavía.

I have communicated more with my neighbors, and with my family even better.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Éramos tres y uno quedó mal.

We were three and only one remains.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Mi relación ha sido igual, yo iba a hablar con ellos pero después pensé que ellos me iban a decir que si yo estoy tan interesada entonces que pague yo, esa persona no ha pagado porque tiene un poco mala la situación, pero yo no le he hablado.

My relation remains the same. I used to go and to talk to them but later I thought that they would notice my interest and persuade to pay for them. That person has not paid back because of his bad situation but I have not talked to him.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

Bueno hay muchas necesidades, las cloacas que no las han terminado y el asfalto.

Well, there are many needs, the sewer that is not finished and the street pavement.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

No, ahorita yo no puedo, yo tengo una hija enferma que atiendo.

No, not now, I have a sick daughter that I need to attend.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Si porque después de que hicimos la reunión allí en Patria Joven nos dijeron que teníamos que ayudarnos con un bingo, una verbena, para ayudar a pagar. En todo lo que ha salido de ahí yo he estado presente.

Yes because after the meet in Patria Joven (nearby community center) they (Facilitators) told us to plan a bingo or something to help to pay. I have been present in everything that has come out of it.

- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**
 Sí. Porque me parece que todos tenemos que estar de acuerdo colaborando porque así es como se ayuda uno. *Yes, because I think that all have to agree on collaborating because it is in that way that we help.*
- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**
 No. Nunca. *No, we have never.*
- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
 (No pertenece). *(The person does not belong to any group).*
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 (No pertenece). *(The person does not belong to any group).*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
 (Se presume que por su situación familiar). *(I presume that it is because of the family situation.).*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
 No, no pertenezco a nada. *No, I do not participate at all.*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
 No. *No, I do not.*
- 2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?**
 Claro, porque así me sale más rápido el crédito, quiero construir una habitación. *Sure, because the credit is a rapid way, I want to ad done bedroom.*

INTERVIEW 5

BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Yo tengo entendido que primero nos pusimos en grupo, nos pusimos de acuerdo, y de los talleres me gustó todo lo que vimos, porque yo no tenía ni idea de nada de eso; y como nos gustó todavía seguimos, a mi esposo le gustó.

I understand that first, we conformed into groups, we agreed, and about the workshops, I liked everything we saw, because I had no idea about all that; and as we liked it, we continue in the program. My husband liked it too.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

Funda Hábitat-Luz y la Alcaldía de Maracaibo, recuerdo la fundación porque los últimos talleres los vimos allí.

The HABITAT-LUZ foundation and the Municipality of Maracaibo, I remember the foundation because the last workshops were offered by it.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Sí. Es una ayuda, bueno, lo que nos dio no fue mucho, fue un comienzo. La casa ya estaba levantada, le faltaba el techo, entonces con el crédito lo que se llegó fue a techar los dos cuartos, el porche y la sala, faltó la cocina.

Yes, it is a help, well, what we received was not much, it was a beginning. The house was already built, the roofing was need, then with the credit we roofed the two bedrooms, the front porch and the living room. We could not do the roofing of the kitchen.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

La gente dice, *vertale* con los créditos te fue bien, por todo lo que hicimos, sería bueno. El hijo dice: “sería bien que dieran el otro crédito para construir el bahareque”. El entrevistado acota: “el crédito lo queremos para hacer el bahareque, yo pedí dos millones para comprar el material, nosotros mismos construimos”. Nos sentimos bien con la casa, porque vivimos ahora solos, somos cuatro.

People know say to me that it went fine with my credit, because of everything we did, it would be good. The son says that it would be good to receive another credit o build the walls. The interviewee says that they want the credit for the walls, I asked for two million and we build ourselves. We feel fine with the house, because we live in separate rooms, we are four.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Al primer taller no fui, yo fui a los talleres de construcción, ahí enseñaron mucho como se hacía una casa, como entraba el sol a la casa, el viento, como se construía una casa, y yo me acordaba allá de cómo estaban construyendo mi casa. Mi esposo fue a los primeros talleres y me dijo que lo pusieron a jugar.

I did not attend the first workshops. I attended the construction workshops. There they (the instructors) trained us on how to build our houses, the use of sun lighting, the wind, and at that moment I associate it with the way my house was being constructed. My husband went to the first workshops and he told me that they made him dance.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Está bien.

It is ok.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Lo que no me gusta de estos créditos es que uno tiene que estar con tres o cuatro personas, ahorita voy a estar con Gladys porque el otro se tardó mucho. Yo fui a hablar con él porque lo que debía eran setenta mil bolívares y por eso es que nos hemos tardado y él me dijo que eso era una miseria, yo le dije que por los setenta mil bolívares no podíamos seguir con el crédito, él pensó que como no era mucho no era importante, después de una reunión en la cancha él pagó.

What I do not like about these credits is that I have to be with three or four in a group. Right now, I go ahead with Gladys because the other person failed for so long. I talked to him because he only owed 70 thousand and for that reason we have been delayed. He told me that was a misery, and I responded that for that money we could not continue with the credits. He so it was not important but after a meeting he finally paid.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Nada.

Nothing.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

La relación es la misma, más o menos. No me relaciono mucho con ellos porque siempre estoy trabajando.

The relationship is the same, more and less. I do not relate that much with them because I am always working.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?**
(Ya este mismo comentario lo realizó en la pregunta 7). *(The same comment is associated in the response to question 7).*
- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**
(Ya este mismo comentario lo realizó en la pregunta 7). *(The same comment is associated in the response to question 7).*
- 2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?**
Bueno, ahorita porque nos echaron un poquito de asfalto, que nos solucionen las cloacas porque ahorita no están funcionando, tenemos todo, faltan las cloacas. *Well, for know the streets received some pavement, but we want the solution of the sewer because now it does not function. We have everything but the sewer is missing.*
- 2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?**
Creo que no, porque todavía faltan varias partes para terminar las cloacas. *I think not, because the sewer is still under construction.*
- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**
No. La asociación de vecinos antes estaba más pendiente de las cosas pero eso está muy abandonado. Y ahora con la junta... *No. Before the neighborhood association paid more attention to things but things are neglected. And now with the communal council....*
- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**
Sí, porque ¿sabes que hicieron? Cuando echaron el asfalto hicieron aquí cerca un hueco en la carretera y no lo han tapado y nosotros nos tenemos que quejar y no lo hemos hecho. *Yes, because, do you know what they did? When the street pavement was done, they left a hole and did not cover it, and we have to complaint but we have not..*
- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**
No. Nunca nos hemos interesado en eso. *No. We have never been interested in that.*
- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
(No pertenece). *(The person does not belong to any group).*

- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 (No pertenece a ningún grupo). *(The person does not belong to any group).*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
 (No le interesa) *(The person is not interested).*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
 No. Me quitan mucho tiempo. *No. It takes a lot of my time.*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
 La junta parroquial, hay un grupo deportivo en el liceo, pero aquí en la comunidad no hay. *The parrish board, there is a sport group in the high school, but here in the community there is none.*
- 2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?**
 Sí porque eso me ayuda, después de la cerca, vamos a seguir construyendo. Después de la cerca hacer el piso nuevo de la casa”. *Yes, because that helps me, after the fence, we will continue building up. After the fence we need to have a new floor done.*

INTERVIEW 6

BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Yo pienso que los talleres hasta ahora me gustaron, me parecieron bien. Aprendí mucho a relacionarme con las personas, con los vecinos, y ahora con este comedor, me ha incentivado el ahorro porque yo hacía gastos que en la vida no me traían ningún beneficio.

I think I liked the workshops out to now, they seem right. I learned a lot how to relate with other people, with the neighbors, and know with this community dining room I am motivated to save because I used to spend in this that did not bring any benefit.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

Yo sé pero no me acuerdo ahorita. Hábitat-LUZ es una, en la última charla que yo fui dijeron todo eso pero no me acuerdo.

I know but I do not remember now. HABITAT-LUZ is one, in the last presentation I attended I heard all that but I do not remember.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Sí, por un cincuenta por ciento, no creo que por un cien. Esta casa era de INAVI y la fachada del frente era un horror, yo le cambié el modelo de las ventanas y la puerta de lata que tenía, le eché unas piedritas y le chispeé el puro frente, adentro estaban los bloques sin frisar y nosotros los chispeamos, mi esposo tuvo que sacar alguito para completar lo del crédito.

Yes, in about fifty percent, I do not think it was in a hundred percent. This house was built by INAVI and the front façade was terrible. I changed the style of my windows and replaced the metal door. I remodeled the front of the house, inside, the walls had no finishing but we did it. My husband had to put some extra money to complete the amount needed.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Todos dicen que eso es bueno, y la facilidad de pago que le dan a uno también y uno va mejorando poco a poco.

Everybody says that is good and the easy payment system that we get as well; and we slowly improve.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Sí. El hijo mío mayor dice que a él le daba pena traer a sus amistades para acá, porque su cuarto no era como él lo quería pero ahora la casa cambió. Hemos mejorado también en ese aspecto.

Yes. My oldest son says that he was ashamed to bring friends over because his bedroom was not as he wanted but now the house has changed. We have improved in that aspect too.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Eso fue donde hicimos los talleres de cómo ahorrar, como relacionarnos con los vecinos porque yo no sabía ni como se llamaban los vecinos, mi familia dice que yo he cambiado como un cincuenta por ciento porque yo no era así, antes era más seria, yo no visitaba a nadie y ahora camino de aquí para allá y de allá para acá, yo siento que he cambiado mucho con estos proyectos.

That was where we attended the workshops on how to save, how to relate with neighbors because I did not know my neighbor's names. My family says that I have change in a fifty percent because I was not like this, before I was more serious, I did not visit anybody and now I walk back and forth. I feel I have changed a lot with these projects.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Esta ya fue de cierta manera contestada en la pregunta anterior por lo cual no se pregunta.

(This was, in a way, answered in the previous question).

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Nada, me gustó porque siempre jugábamos, nos daba un poquito de pena pararnos pero siempre participábamos.

Nothing, I liked it because we always played, we were a little be ashamed to stand up in front of the group but we always participated.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Sí. Mucho. Muchos han querido meterse en el programa.

Yes, it has changed a lot. Many others want to participate in the program.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

En el grupo éramos cuatro, tres hombres y yo. Abraham era el que estaba un poco dudoso pero él arrancó, pero creo que ahora no va a continuar en el proyecto.

In the group, we were four, three men and I. Abraham was doubtful but he started building, but now I think he will not continue.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

La relación ha sido la misma. Abraham es el que no va a continuar porque tiene un problema con un hijo.

The relationship has been the same. Abraham will not continue because he has a problem with his son.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

El problema más grave que hay aquí es que no hay cloacas. Están pero no están instaladas, aparte de eso la inseguridad, que ahorita estamos pagándoles a los poli-wayuu (vigilancia pagada por los propios residentes a indígenas de la etnia wayuu) que es como una vacuna, pero hasta ahora han respondido.

The worst problem that we have is the sewer. They are built but they are not connected to the main line. Besides, there is the insecurity, now we pay to the poliwayuu (paid service to indigenous wayuu people), it is more like a mandatory fee, but until now, they have responded.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Para solucionarlo tendría que meterme en un grupo de aquí del barrio, pero aquí no funciona eso. Aquí ha habido problemas con el comedor porque creen que uno quiere imponerles a la gente que seamos unidos, pero no sé si será por la envidia, no sé, uno quiere que ellos colaboren con uno, que vengan a limpiar, a acomodar, porque esto es de ellos, pero ellos no vienen. Ese es el problema que yo a veces tengo con ellos, cuando se dice que vamos a tener una reunión vienen dos o tres, pero cuando se dice que vamos a dar una bolsa de comida hasta el inválido que está en la cama viene.

here it does not work. I have had problems with some people here in the community dining room because they think I want to impose them that we should join. However, I do not know if it is envy, I do not know, because this is theirs too, but they do not come. This is the problem I sometimes have with them. When we call a meeting only two or three come, but if we say we are giving away food even the handicap stands up from his bed and comes.

In order to solve them I should become member of a group in the barrio, but

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

A muy pocos les he dicho, a muchos les ha parecido bueno, por ahí hay una que quiere meterse pero no puede porque no tiene casa y lo primordial es tener la casa. Hace poco pasé más de ocho días sin que el aseo pasara, suspendí la comida viernes y sábado porque la basura tenía muchos gusanos y yo le decía a la comunidad que me ayudaran a botar la basura en el monte, y tu ¿crees que se movieron?, prefirieron no buscar la comida ni viernes ni sábado, aquí pasa el aseo cada quince días pero nadie hace presión y el presidente lo que quiere es que nos unamos.

I have just told a few. It has been good for many. One person I know wants to apply but the requirement includes the ownership of a dwelling. Some days ago there was too much garbage accumulated and I had to suspend the service. I asked the community to help cleaning up the garbage and guess what: Do you think they came? They preferred not having food for two days. Nobody does anything if the garbage is collected every fifteen days and the president wants of to be united.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Sí claro.

Yes, of course.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

No (aunque dice que no, este comedor social es un grupo comunitario, que soluciona un problema de la comunidad). Vamos a hacer una reunión con todos los representantes de los que comen aquí. Para el comité de alimentación. Para involucrar más gente y esté un encargado de venir a limpiar el patio, venir a lavar los corotos, venir a organizar las carteleras. Yo le pido a

Dios que todo salga bien porque me gusta trabajar con mucha gente.
No, we do not (even though she said no, the dining room is a social group from the community that attempts to solve a local problem). We are having a meeting with the persons that eat here to form a group, to involve more people and select someone to be in charge of cleaning and organizing an information board. I ask god because I like to work with many people.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Se hizo referencia en la pregunta anterior por lo cual no se pregunta esta nuevamente.

(Refer to the previous answer).

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

El comedor tiene un año.

The community dining room is one-year old.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

No participa.

The person does not participate.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

No participa.

The person does not participate.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Aquí por el mismo programa este (el comedor) había un comité de salud. Había diez personas y a mí me gustaba mucho involucrarme en eso porque me gustan los programas familiares, y es que yo me pregunto ¿por qué será que la persona más pobre es la que más padece?, entonces aquí se ven cosas que dan dolor. Aquí nunca se va a acabar la pobreza por eso. Yo me iba a meter en ese grupo pero después me eché para atrás. Ellos están trabajando algunos.

Here, as part of this program we had a health committee, with ten members. I liked to get involved because I like the family-related programs, and I ask myself: why the poorest people have more children? Here, poverty will never be overcome because of that. I was going to be part of that group but then I gave up. Some of them are still working.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Con mucho gusto, porque yo quiero mejorar más. La mejora mía es que yo quiero hacer una enramada aquí para montar los dos tanques de agua en una placa y otra parte de acerolit para área de trabajo en el comedor, después quiero echar una plaquita en el frente.

I am more than glad, because I want to improve more. I want to do a concrete structure in the backyard and put two water tanks on top, and another roof to cover the space where we work. Later I want to continue in the front part of the house.

INTERVIEW 7
BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Bueno, yo todo el tiempo que hicieron los talleres nos llevamos bien. Yo iba a los talleres menos a dos que fue mi hija por mí. *Well, we get along well during the workshops. I used to attend the workshops, but in two occasions, my daughter did it for me.*
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
Al Sami. (no hace referencia a otros). *The Sami (The person does not recall the other partner institutions).*
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Cambié el techo, bueno fue como un 20 o 25 por ciento. Fíjate que quería subir el nivel del piso y no se pudo. Y aun está así. Logré hacer el techo, estaba bastante feíto, era muy bajito. Había mucho calor y estaba malo. Además, los materiales están muy caros. *I change the roof, at least between 20 and 25 percent. See that I wanted to elevate the house but I could not; and it remains the same. I could accomplish the roofing. It was a little bit ugly and was very low. There was a lot of heat and it was in bad shape. Besides, the construction supplies are very expensive.*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Que valió la pena. Después que cancelé vinieron y tomaron fotos. Me ofrecieron otro crédito. Además, yo he ido ahorrando con mucho esfuerzo. *That it was worthy. After I finished my payments, they (SAMI) came and took some pictures. I was offer another credit. Besides, I have been saving with a lot of effort.*
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
Cogimos una experiencia más o menos. Estamos bien. Nunca lo habíamos hecho antes. Nos ponían a bailar. *We had an experience, more and less. We are well. We never did it before. They made us dance.*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
Muy bien. Yo calificaría eso como una experiencia que uno adquiere. Una cosa que le queda a uno. *It was very good. I would qualify it as an experience that one can have, something that remains with you.*

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Bailábamos, nos divertimos. Teníamos un vecino que hablaba mucho, recuerdo, nos reíamos con él y le decíamos que hablaba hasta por nosotros. Tuvimos la oportunidad de que nos prestaran un salón aquí mismo en la comunidad. Son tantas cosas que... después me acuerdo.

We danced, and had a lot of fun. We had a neighbor who talked a lot, I remember, we laughed at him and told him to talk for us. We had the opportunity to use a meeting room here in the community. There are so many things... I will remember later.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Yo le quisiera agregar poco porque la verdad, todo estaba bien. Y quitarle, nada.

I would like to add just a little, everything was fine. And what to remove? Nothing.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Con los vecinos nos relacionamos siempre bien. Con la familia, tengo 42 años casado con mi mujer y todavía nos hablamos (ríe).

We always get along pretty well with our neighbors. With my family, I have been married to my wife for 42 years and we still talk to each other (and laugh).

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Tuvimos un grupo. Nos la llevábamos bien. Escogimos los de esta calle.

We had a group. We got along with each other. We live on this same street.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Parece que hubieron algunos que quedaron mal porque a lo último, nos agregaron unos que quedaron mal (no pagaron). Aún nos conocemos.

It seems that some people failed because they did not pay. We still know each other.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

No alcanza el Panorama (diario local) para escribir los problemas. Lo más, más, es la inseguridad. El gas que nos llega poquito. El agua es normal como en Maracaibo, 24 horas por 24 horas. La cañada en verdad no me afecta.

The newspaper is not enough to write down the problems. The first problem is the insecurity. The domestic gas is not enough. The water is as irregular as in the rest of the city (every 24 hours). The cañada, in fact, does not affect me.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

El gas, será? La luz la tenemos bien. Yo no me quejo del barrio. Pero la inseguridad?... como lo resolvería? Yo pago pero creo que eso es una vacuna (pago forzado). Tengo que pagar y no quejarme porque se meten y me roban.

The domestic gas, will do. The electricity is ok. I complain about the barrio. But the insecurity... how could I solve it? I pay but I think it is a forced fee. I have to pay and not complain because then I can be robbed.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Yo pienso que sí. Debe ser por el acercamiento de los vecinos por tener más comunicación, nos hablamos. Dios nos puso a todos en esta calle igual. Cuando se nos va un vecino estamos pendientes de quien va a llegar para ver como es.

I think so. It probably is because neighbors are closer to each other and communicate more, we talk to each other. God put us in this same street. When a neighbor moves out, we are attentive of who moves in to get to know him.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Yo pienso que sí. Bastante. Si uno no participa con la comunidad no se consigue nada. A veces a uno le da rabia porque invitan (a reuniones) y la gente no va. La excusa/... trabajo, no tengo tiempo. Yo participo para exponer y saber.

I think yes. It means a lot. If one does not participate with the community, we accomplish nothing. Sometimes I get upset because the invite (to attend meetings) and people do not go. The excuses... work, lack of time. I participate to express and know.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Yo fui cuando era la asociación de vecinos hasta hace como dos años. Conseguimos el agua, la carretera (el asfaltado de las vías). Margarita (la líder) se mete donde sea. Yo no seguí.

I was a member when it was the neighborhood association about two years ago. We accomplished the water, the roads (pavement). The leader goes everywhere if needed. I did not continue.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Yo era el comisario. Yo solucionaba y arreglaba los problemas de la comunidad. Cuando iba y no se podía, nombrábamos un grupo e íbamos como seis u ocho a solucionar el problema.

I was the commissary. I used to solve the problems and put order in the community. When I went and could not resolve a situation we used to conform a group, six to eight people, and went together to solve the problem.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

Ahora no está activo.

Now, the person is not active.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

A veces uno no tiene el tiempo. Hablamos de la experiencia, ir a hablar sin desayuno, sacar la plata de su propio bolsillo, pierdes el día de trabajo. Hay otros más desocupados. Hay que darle paso a la juventud.

Sometimes one does not have the time. I say it because I have experience, going without breakfast, using our own money, losing the day of work. Others are less busy. We have to give the task to the young people.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Ya no. (Explicó sus razones).

Not any more (the person exposed his reasons).

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Nada más la junta, que venía a ser la asociación de vecinos.

Only the council, that happens to be the neighborhood association.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Ojalá si pudiera conseguir otro crédito. Para comprar la casa a mi hijo. Me vinieron a ofrecer otro crédito yo pagaba más de lo que debía en cada cuota. Pagué rápido. Había quedado pendiente con los pisos. Hice una libreta (de ahorros) en el banco con el programa. Yo si ahorro. Yo le aconsejo a los muchachos que ahorren. Uno no sabe que va a pasar mañana.

I wish I could get another credit to buy a house for my son. I was offered another credit. I used to pay more than it was required in each installment. I paid rapidly. I had the flooring in mind. I opened a saving account with the program, I do save. I give the same advice to my sons. We do not know what can happen tomorrow.

INTERVIEW 8

BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Aprendí muchas cosas. Tuve muchas nuevas amistades. Compartimos. Cada vez que venía la muchacha (facilitadora) fue muy chévere. Hasta hicimos una merienda y compartimos.
I learned many things. I made many new friends. We shared. Every time the facilitator came, it was very nice. We even had a picnic and we shared.
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
Creo que era el Sami. Creo que está relacionado con la alcaldía. no recuerdo bien.
I think it was the Sami. I think it is related to the Municipality. I do not remember well.
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Si porque yo hice dos piezas más, un cuartito y una salita. No alcanzó para todo pero pedí una platica.
Yes because I added two more rooms, a bedroom and a living room. The money was not enough but I asked for some more.
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Ellos se alegraron mucho porque anteriormente no había esos programas para que la gente pudiera mejorar su casa. Mira, cuando llueve la cañada se desborda y llega hasta acá. La primera vez que se inundó perdí mucho. Es difícil. Yo también me alegré. Mi mama vivía en un ranchito aquí (en el frente de la parcela) y ahora vivimos juntaos. Esto era antes muy peligroso. A muchos (ladrones) los han matado. Venían de otros barrios. Ahora tenemos vigilancia comunal.
They were happy because before we did not have these programs to help people improve their homes. Look, when it rains the cañada overflows and the water reaches this point. The first time I lost a lot. It is hard. I was happy too. My mother used to live in a little rancho here in front and now we live together. It was unsecured. Many thieves have been killed. They came from other barrios. Now we have community enforcement.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

En una clase recuerdo que nos pusieron a hacer nuestros sueños en dibujos y explicamos allí cada quien sus sueños. Los dibujamos allí y los llevamos a la clase. Después lo que habíamos vivido, algo así como nuestra historia en una hoja. Ellos nos prestaban los lápices y colores. Luego nos explicaron cómo hacer la mezcla (para construir) como teníamos que medir, con unos niveles. Que no era así, no como la mía, sino así, de otra manera. Yo en verdad estaba embarazada y yo iba con ese barrigón. No importa, aprendí allí.

I remember one class where they put us to represent our dreams using drawings and we each one explained our dreams. We drew them there and we took them to the class. Later we wrote about our personal life. We borrowed their color pencils. Later they explained how to mix the concrete, and how to measure, that it was not the way we used to do but other. At that time, I was pregnant and I went with my big body. I did not care, I learned there.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

En verdad, hacer ese trabajo fue muy interesante. Aprendimos cosas muy importantes que yo no sabía.

In reality, doing that work was very interesting. We learned very important things that I did not know.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

(Ya explicó anteriormente su experiencia en la pregunta 5).

(Refer to answer to question 5).

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Para mí no creo que faltó nada.

For me, I do not think it needed anything..

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Si cambió mucho. Nos enseñaron un curso de relaciones humanas. Yo tenía un genio muy fuerte. Compartiendo me di cuenta que no tenía que ser así. Con los vecinos también, aunque los vecinos no son muy buenos, como en otras partes. Ellos (los vecinos) nada más que están pendientes de lo que hacemos. Yo igualito con mis vecinos (en el trato). Yo igual mejoré en eso.

Yes, it changed a lot. We learned about human relations. I had a bad humor. By sharing I found out that I should not be like that. It was the same with my neighbors, despite they are not that good, as in other places. They are only looking at what we do. I behave the same with them. I improved in that sense as well.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Muchos dijeron no porque dijeron que nadie iba a pagar la deuda de otro. Otros dijeron que si es así porque no podemos hacer si estamos trabajando en grupo.

Many people said not because nobody was willing to pay other people's debts. Others said yes because they were working as a group.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Éramos cinco. Una era un poco más difícil. Vivían por esta misma calle. Igual nos tratábamos todos, los seguimos tratando.

We were five; one was a little bit difficult. They all lived in this same street. Likewise, we get along well, and we still treat them.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

La cañada porque se inunda, se desborda todo lo que es el barrio. Es un desastre. El agua está bien, la cloaca también funciona. La electricidad bien, a veces se va pero es igual que en otras partes.

The cañada because it overflows and affects all the barrio. It is a disaster. The water supply is okay. The sewer also functions. The electricity is fine, some times, it fails but it is like in other places.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

El problema que veo ahorita es la cañada. Por lo menos no botar la basura (en la cañada).

The problem that I see now is the cañada. At least, not throwing garbage on it.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Si, porque anteriormente la gente decía que en el barrio cada quien limpiaba su casa. Entonces la gente empezó a limpiar su frente, a sembrar unas maticas, por eso, que la comunidad se viera diferente. Por lo menos en esas charlas, esas reuniones, muchos van, otros, ahí no, no van.

Yes, because before people used to say that in the barrio each person cleaned his house. Then people started cleaning their street, to plant some trees, to see the community different. At least, many people go to those workshops but others do not go either.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Si. La palabra dice somos una comunidad. Si no participamos en nuestra comunidad, entonces ¿quién va a hacerlo por nosotros? No van a venir de otra comunidad a hacer lo nuestro aquí.

Yes, the word itself says we are a community. If we do not participate in our own community, then who is going to do it for us? No one will come from another community to do our things here.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

No.

No, we do not.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

Todavía no. Cuando hicieron el consejo otros, no nombraron a nadie. Ellos se eligieron ellos mismos. Hay son como catorce. Ellos se hicieron su cuestión y se reeligieron.

Not yet. When the council was organized they did not appointed anybody else but them. They elected themselves. They are like fourteen. The made it up and reelected themselves.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Puede ser que sí. Ahora que si el grupo tiene que hacer o no. En una reunión solo dicen que aquí esté el cargo (de ellos) a disposición (a manera de reto a la audiencia). Ellos hablan y hablan. Si estaría dispuesta. Así aprendo más y tengo conocimiento de lo que ellos hacen. No he visto cambios.

I may be willing to. In meetings, they only say that they would leave their positions to intimidate us. They talk and talk. Am I willing? In that way, I could learn more and be more aware of what they do. I have not seen any change.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

El consejo nuevo de todo. Muchos dicen que si bajó la plata (para construir algunas nuevas viviendas) pero dicen que el que lleva eso se agarró la plata. No me crea. Eso dicen. No se ha visto nada, de verdad.

The new council. Many people say that they received funding to build some new houses, but they also say that the one who manages it took the money. Do not trust me, that is what people say. I have not seen anything, true.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Lo que pasa, a mi me gustaría. Y tengo un problema, pero de verdad, no he cancelado (el crédito). Yo tengo tiempo. Tendría que pagar primero. Yo lo que haría sería hacer otra pieza allá donde está más alto. No me acuerdo cuanto debía. El señor venía pero yo no me acuerdo.

I would like to. I have a problem, but really, I have not paid (the credit). I have money. I should pay first. I would add another room there in that area. I do not remember how much I owe. The person (the economic advisor) used to come but I do not remember.

INTERVIEW 9
BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Aprender algo. (No responde mucho, está aún reservada y tímida). *It meant learning something (the person does not respond much because is shy and reserved).*
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
En verdad, no me acuerdo. *In fact, I do not remember.*
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Hicimos un cuarto, la cocina y el baño. Alcanzó algo aunque completamos. *We added a bedroom, the kitchen and the bathroom. The credit was enough but we also put something else.*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Ante estábamos más incómodos. Somos muchos. Ahora es más cómodo. Estamos divididos. Ahora hay cocina y baño. Antes había que esperar a que el otro saliera del baño, ahora es más chévere. Mi mamá se siente bien porque la casa ha cambiado un poco. *Before, it was very uncomfortable. We are many. Now it is more comfortable. We are divided physically. Now there is a kitchen and a bathroom. Before we had to wait to use it, now it is better. My mother feels better because the house had changed a little bit.*
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
Ha mejorado. Dormimos mejor porque hay otro cuarto en la casa. Gracias a Dios logramos lo que queríamos. *The house has improved. We sleep better because we have an additional room in our house. Thanks to god, we accomplished what we wanted.*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
Los cursos a los que fui me parecieron bien. Si nos enseñaron. Yo no sabía que era el compartir. *The workshops we attended seemed well to me. We learned. I did not know what sharing was.*

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Se hacían juegos, mímicas, bromas, para aprender muchas cosas. Nos enseñaron a construir. Les contaba a todos lo que hacíamos en el taller (en su familia). Mi mama siempre me preguntaba si había prestado atención y si había prendido.

We played games, mimics, jokes, to learn many things. They told us how to build. I told everybody what I did in the workshop. My mother always asked me if I had paid attention and if I had learned.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

No. Me parece igual, todo bien.

Not. I think the same. Everything is fine.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Yo era muy, no sé, no me la llevaba con nadie. Yo no conozco a nadie. Después que fui me pareció bien. Las personas que iban yo conocía más gente. Yo era muy seca. Ahora digo que soy bien chévere. Con los vecinos, nos tratamos lo normal. Más que todo con mi familia mejorasteis y habéis cambiado un poco. Antes yo era muy gruñona. Medio me miraban y yo contestaba. Ahora no.

I was like, I do not know, I did not get along with anybody. I do not know anybody. After I went, I thought it was ok. I knew the people who also went. I had no feelings. Now I say that I am very nice. With the neighbors, we get along pretty well. I improved the relationship with my family. I have changed. Before, I was very grumpy. If someone looked at me, I responded. Not now.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Bueno, en el grupo fuimos tres. Aunque más o menos porque ellos no terminaron de pagar. Por eso ella (mi mama) ha ido a buscar otro, sola.

Well, we were three in the group, but more and less, because they did not finished paying back. For that reason, my mother looked for another person to join with.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Nos seguimos llevando bien, la señora R es la suegra de mi hermano. Con la señora M, solo la vemos de vez en cuando, la vemos y la saludamos.

We still get along with each other. R is my brother's mother in law. With M, we only see them occasionally; and we salute her.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

La inseguridad, el mal servicio de la recolección de basura. Tenemos colapsada la red de cloacas y el gas que no hay fuerza (presión) desde que hicieron la toma en el barrio San Benito (barrio vecino).

The insecurity, the bad quality of garbage collection service. We have collapsed the sewer and the domestic gas has no pressure since they (the municipality) provided the neighboring barrio with the service.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Yo haría que el consejo comunal llame a una asamblea para recoger las inquietudes y pasar un informe a las entidades a las que les compete.

I would make the communal council call a meeting to collect all our concerns and present a report to the responsible institutions.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Sí, porque.... (Piensa) nunca llegaremos a nada sin todos.

Yes, because (the person thinks) we will never reach anything without everybody.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Sí, el Consejo comunal nos de participación a toda la comunidad. No trabaja bien.

Yes, that the communal council let participate all the community. It does not work well.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Yo trabajo en lo de Manuel rosales (Gobernador de tendencia opositora al Chavismo).

I work in Manuel Rosales' campaign (candidate for the opposition).

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Ahorita estamos en los proyectos de rancho a casa (sustitución) y las ayudas de materiales. Eso es por núcleo (forma de organización partidista) y trabajo en un núcleo de base aquí en Miraflores.

Right now we are in the project to substitute ranchos for houses and in the assistance with construction materials. That is done by nucleus (participatory political form of organization). I work in a grassroots nucleus here in Miraflores.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

Desde hace poco.

Since recently.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

No aplica.

Does not apply.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

No aplica.

Does not apply.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

El consejo comunal, los núcleos de base y por aquí los consejos comunales no hacen nada, no caminan en nada. Aquí se llamó a asamblea para pedir la revocación.

The comunal council, the local party groups. Here the communal councils do not do anything, do not move on. Here, a assembly was called to vote their resignation.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Sí. Porque ella (su mamá) habló con la señora M. para conseguir un dinero pero aun está esperando. Son tantas cosas, queremos echar el bahareque (muros perimetrales) porque se meten (los ladrones) por donde sea. Hay que terminarla.

Yes, because she (the mother) talked to M to see if she can get some money for her, but she is still waiting. There are so many things, we want to build the fence because the thieves trespass our property. We need to finish it.

INTERVIEW 10
BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Me gustó mucho porque eso era un ahora y un después. Si va por la mejora y cómo íbamos a mejorar, hasta hicimos un proyecto. Nos dieron bastantes talleres aquí en la casa de la vecina con aire acondicionado y sillas porque la gente no tenía para pagar los pasajes para ir a Bella vista o a la alcaldía.

I liked it a lot because that was a now and later. We went for an improvement and how to do it. We even did a project. They offered many workshops here in my neighbor's house with air conditioning and chairs because people could afford to pay for transportation to Bella Vista or the municipality in downtown.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

No sé si era el Sami, la que caminaba por aquí (la asesora del barrio). Ella trabajó mucho.

I do not know if it was from SAMI, the girl who used to walk around (the economic advisor). She worked hard.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Sí, mejoró. Se frisaron paredes. Se arregló la enramada de atrás. Aunque ya se están cayendo otra vez. Recibí como 550 mil. Si me alcanzó para algo. Antes eran más baratas las cosas.

Yes, it improved. The walls were finished. The roofing in the patio was fixed, even though it is falling again. I received about 550 thousand. It was enough for something. However, before, things were cheaper than today.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Ve como está la casa. Ahorita ve estos muros (caída del friso) será por la sal o el salitre. (Se quejan de las condiciones de la vivienda).

See my house. Now you see the walls (in bad conditions), it is probably the salt or the dust. (They complain about the condition of the house).

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Si porque allí fueron buenísimos. Allí salíamos a relucir todo lo que sentíamos. Todo lo que daban ellos (los facilitadores) aprendimos mucho.

Yes, because they were good there. There we exteriorized everything we felt. We learned a lot from them (the facilitators).

Al principio todos tenían miedo porque pensé que era otra cosa, con exámenes, pero todo fue sobre nosotros mismos. Como ahorrar y tratar el dinero. De allí, de lo poco que aprendí como echar para adelante, monté un negocio. Fue un empujón.

At the beginning we were all scared because I thought that it was something else, with exams, but everything was about us, how to save and use the money. From there, from what I learned, I opened a business. It was an impulse.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Me encantaron, si los volvieran a dar... no saben todo lo que uno aprende. Tenían un pero para todo (otros vecinos). Todos con cosas que hacer nos dedicamos. Todos estábamos bien.

I loved them; if they had more... you do not imagine how much I learned. They had an excuse for everything (the other neighbors). We all had things to do but we dedicated the time. We all were just fine.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Como estaba metida más con la idea de mi negocio. Me acuerdo que una señora tenía un ranchito y llevó una maqueta de sus casa de cómo la quería, con colores, con su rejita y todo, y todos nosotros quedamos encantados. Esa gente hasta lloraba. Quien lo vivió mejoró mucho. Esa señora logró construir su casa.

I was more immersed in my idea of a store. I remember a lady that had a little rancho and brought a model of her desired house, with colors, with a little fence and everything, and we all were enchanted. That people even cried. Those who experienced it improved a lot. This woman could build her house.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Esos talleres estuvieron muy bien para uno relacionarse con las personas. El sabernos administrar, de cómo vamos a darle una buena vista a la calle, que al vecino o vecina se ayuda, no solo mi casa. Nosotros mantenemos mi frente limpio. Además de querer lo que nosotros tenemos.

Those workshops were very well for people to relate with each other and to know how to administer the income, how to give a new look to our streets how to help our neighbor, not only at home. We keep our house fronts cleaned. We care for the things we have.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

A la familia muchísimo, con la casa colaboramos todos. No es solo de una persona, mientras más unidos estamos más solidarios somos.

Toward the family, a lot. We all collaborate at home. The house does not belong to one person, the more we share, the helpful we are.

Nos ayudamos para arreglar la casa.
Nos llevamos bien con los vecinos.
Esta vecina es como una hija, la de
enfrente es como una hermana, ya
ves.

*We help each other repairing the house.
We also get along with the neighbors.
That neighbor over there is like a
daughter, the one in front is like a
sister, you see.*

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Unos avanzamos, pagamos muy
bien. Y otros no pagaron y nos
trancamos nosotros también.
Entonces hablamos para hacerlo (el
crédito siguiente) individualmente.
Fue una observación en las reuniones

*Some people move on, we pay very well.
Others did not pay and we got trapped.
Therefore, we spoke to them to let us
apply again individually. We presented
that argument in the meetings.*

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Imagínate, hubo problemas con dos
de ellos y hasta enemistados. Nos
encargábamos de ir a cobrarles y se
molestaron. Vinieron a cobrarles y
por eso se molestaron y formaron
brollos (chismes). No nos tratamos a
consecuencia de eso, por su
irresponsabilidad. Unos no estuvieron
de acuerdo en pagar la deuda de los
otros. Aunque el señor C pagó muy
bien y fue muy líder. Si mantenemos
muy bien nuestra amistad.

*Imagine, there were problems with two
of them. Someone came to pursue them
to pay, they got upset, and they spread
gossips. We do not communicate
because of that, because of their
irresponsibility. We tried to pay the
debt but some did not agree on paying
other people's debts. Nevertheless,
mister C paid on time and was a leader.
We both preserve our friendship.*

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

El problema ahorita es el gas. Nos
han venido a arreglar y nada. La
vigilancia, bueno, es de aquí mismo,
De afuera no viene nadie (la policía).
Las calles están. Las cloacas, el
mismo problema en todas partes con
el agua. Aquí la cañada, yo sufro
menos pero a esa gente de allá,
pierde todos, pobres...

*security is from the same barrio. The
police do not come. We have streets.
The sewer... and the water is the same
problem everywhere. Here the cañada,
well, I suffer less than other people who
lose everything, poor them...*

*The current problem is the domestic
gas. They came to fix but nothing. The*

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

¿Cómo? Será reuniéndonos e ir allá a
donde están las compañías grandes y
hablar allá. O pasar una carta.

*How? It may be by gathering and going
to those big companies and talking
there, or writing a letter.*

Yo no podría arreglarlos. Eso es un problema interno de ellos. Así podría colaborar.

I, myself, could not solve them. That is an internal problem of those companies. In that way, I could collaborate.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Si influyó para que partir.

Yes, it influenced me to start.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Claro, muchísimo. Fíjate que este es uno de los barrios que se encuentra en mejores condiciones. La gente aquí se preocupa por sus calles, por lo que ves, por lo bonito. (Repite la anécdota de la señora y su rancho).

Sure, a lot. See that this is one of the barrios that show the best conditions. People here are worried about their streets, for what you see, because of its beauty.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Ninguno. Yo soy la que estoy en eso. La broma del consejo no ha echado para adelante. Hay reuniones y yo estoy yendo.

No one else besides me does. The council has not moved on. Meetings are held and I am attending.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Yo como estoy metida en el deporte por mi trabajo, me gustaría estar pendiente de eso. La cancha está peor y me gustaría estar allí. Ya eso no tiene ni puerta. La cancha es el punto de referencia para hacer las reuniones. Eso es lo que debe tener más presencia.

Me, as I am involved with sports because of my job, I would like to take care of that. The sport court is worse now and I would like to be in charge of that. It does not even have doors. It is the place of reference to conduct meetings. That is why it should have a better image.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

Aún no. Ahora estoy más pendiente.

Not yet, now I am more aware.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

Antes no porque no le había tomado importancia, no por el tiempo. Porque en verdad uno puede sacar ese tiempo.

Not before because I did not give it proper relevance, not because of time. In fact, I can find the time.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Si. Ahora si quiero poner mi granito de arena en la comunidad.

Yes. Now I want to offer some help to my community.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Ninguna.

No, I do not.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Si me gustaría. Porque uno con eso aprenden más las personas para recibir conciencia en los talleres. Reciben eso como entonces y van a recibir los créditos. Pero las personas creen que solo era recoger su plata y ya. Con los talleres uno sabe que no es eso, que se debe ser responsable y usar bien los materiales para la construcción.

Yes, I would like to, because in the workshops people learn to be conscious. If they learn that as we did, they will receive the credit. But people believed that it was only to get some money and that's it. In the workshops, we find out that it is not like that, that we must be responsible and use the construction supplies properly.

INTERVIEW 11
BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Nos dio muchas ideas, todas las cosas que nos dieron fueron muy bonitas, las charlas con las profesoras fueron muy bonitas. No pensábamos que fuera a ser así, que fuéramos a tener tanta confianza con ella. *It gave me many ideas; all the things that they gave us were pretty. The presentations of the teachers were also pretty. We did not think it was like this, that we were so confident with her.*
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
Del SAMI (asesor del barrio). *SAMI (because of the economic advisor of the barrio).*
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Bastante. A mí me sirvió mucho para comprar la ventana. *It improved a lot. To me, it helped me to buy the new Windows.*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Les ha gustado mucho ahora que estoy frisando. *They have liked it a lot now that I am working on finishing the walls.*
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
Me siento muy bien, muy contenta y mi familia también. Las ideas que nos dieron de construcción fueron muy buenas. *I feel very well, very content and my family does too. The ideas that they gave us about the construction were good as well.*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
Eran como juegos para enseñarnos a ahorrar. *They were like games to teach us how to save.*
- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**
Fueron muchas cosas, nos enseñaron sobre el ahorro y a compartir, la pasamos muy bien. *There were many things, they taught us about saving and sharing, we enjoyed it.*

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

La pasábamos muy bien, que no nos queríamos devolver de los talleres.

We had a great time. We did not want to leave the workshops.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Yo le contaba a mi familia lo que hacía, todos los juegos que hacía y con los vecinos no tuve ningún problema.

I used to tell my family what we had done, all the games. With my neighbors, I had no problem at all.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Todo bien, no tuvimos ningún problema, todos quedaron bien con su pago.

Everything was fine, we didnt have any problema. Every body paid.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Ha estado bien.

It has been well.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

Las cloacas y la cañada que cuando llueve se desborda y se nos mete en la casa.

The sewer and the cañada, which overflow when it rains. The water comes into our houses.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Si tengo que participar en alguna reunión o apoyar, participo.

If I have to attend a meeting or give my support, then I participate.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Si.

Yes, I do.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

No. (se presume esta respuesta por no completar el proyecto de mejora)

No, I do not. (This response may have been influenced by the fact that the project was not accomplished).

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

No.

No, we do not.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 No participa. *(The person does not participate).*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
 Será porque nunca me han dicho nada, no tengo el interés. *It probably is because I have never been told anything, I am not interested.*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
 Si. *Yes, I am.*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
 Solamente la asociación de vecinos. *Only the neighbors association.*
- 2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?**
 Si, porque los talleres que realizan nos ayudan mucho, lo que pensamos hacer ahora con el crédito es la electricidad y mejorar los cuartos, frisar y echarles el piso. *Yes, because the workshops that we attended helped us a lot. What we plan to do with the new credit is the electricity. We also want to finish the walls and the flooring of the bedrooms.*

INTERVIEW 12
BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Ciudadanía plena es una mancomunidad y lo preparan a uno para uno desarrollarse, como se van a hacer los ahorros, como van a ser las responsabilidades en el grupo, como se va a quedar bien con los créditos, como cooperar con los miembros del grupo. Por ejemplo, a uno de los del grupo mío yo le hice el bahareque para cooperar con él.
Full Citizenship is a community and they train us in self-development, in how to save, in how to respond to the credit, in how to cooperate with members of the group. For example, I built the wall of one group member's house to cooperate with him.
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
El SAMI, la universidad.
Sami and the university.
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Todavía no porque no he arrancado, pero tengo el material. He tenido varios problemas personales, me separé de mi esposa, estoy viviendo solo aquí en la casa.
Not yet, I have not started. However, I have the construction material. I have had various personal problems. I divorced my wife. I am living alone here in the house.
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
No se realizó la mejora.
The project was not accomplished.
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
No se realizó la mejora.
The project was not accomplished.
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
Sí, el conocimiento que nos dieron sobre la construcción fue bastante práctico.
Yes, what I learned about construction was very practical.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Fueron muy buenos, se busca la relación más que todo entre el grupo. Hay gente que no le para mucho porque lo que le interesa es el dinero para sus cosas. Los talleres lo relajan a uno.

They were very good. What it pursues is, more than everything, the relationship of the group. There is people that do not value it because what they care is the money for their things. The workshops help me to relax.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Los talleres están bien, a mi me faltó un taller porque no me avisaron a tiempo.

The workshops are fine; I lost one session because I was not contacted don time.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Yo considero que estamos un poco estancados. La plata no nos alcanzó para nada y hay que trabajar más para poder completar.

I consider that we are a little stagnant. The credit was not enough and we had to work more to complete.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Estamos en comunicación. Ellos entienden el problema que yo tengo. Con mi trabajo tuve que pagarlo, yo no quería atrasarme.

We keep in touch. They understand my problem. I paid it with my effort; I did not want to be late.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Estamos en comunicación.

We keep in touch.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

En cuanto a los servicios públicos estamos desesperados con las cloacas, en frente de mi casa quedó un problema.

Concerning public services, we are desperate because of the sewer. I have a problem just in front of my house.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Hay que atacar a la empresa responsable.

We must attack the institution that is responsible.

- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**
 Yo era dirigente de la comunidad, siempre me he mantenido en contacto con la gente. *I was a community leader; I have always liked to keep in touch with people.*
- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**
 Sí, porque entre más gente haya y con más pensamientos es como las cosas pueden mejorar. *Yes, because having more people and more ways of thinking things can improve.*
- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**
 Ahora no, antes era más activo. Estuve a punto de ganar la vicepresidencia pero no se pudo. *Before, I was more active, but not now. I was almost elected as vicepresident but was not.*
- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
 No he participado pero he sido activista político. Se va a sacar una asociación civil paralela a la asociación de vecinos en la que yo estoy involucrado. *I have not participated but I have been a political activist. Some people are creating a civil association other than the one I am involved with.*
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 No participa. *(The person does not participate).*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
 Ahora no, estuve a punto de ganar la vicepresidencia pero no se pudo. *Not now, I was almost elected as vicepresident.*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
 Si. *Yes, I am willing to.*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
 No, no hay ninguna. Se estaba hablando de hacer un grupo para el reciclaje de plástico. *No, there is none. People were talking about creating a group to recycle plastic.*
- 2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?**
 Sí, porque me interesa un crédito mayor. A través de esos créditos se pueden lograr muchas cosas, mejorar la casa o microempresas, si me meto en microempresa me va mejor porque el negocio me da para pagar. *Yes because I am interested in a higher credit, because by means of those credits we can accomplish many things like improving the house o a micro-business, which can produce to pay.*

INTERVIEW 13
BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Uno se orienta con la relación con la sociedad. Nosotros somos muy relacionados con las personas pero el proyecto permite que uno se familiarice más con las personas. *One can be guided in the relationship with society. We are very friendly but the project allows us to strengthen personal relationships.*
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
El SAMI y la Universidad. *The SAMI and the University.*
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Si. Ha mejorado porque le agregue un espacio a la casa. *Yes, I have improved because I added a space to my house.*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Para hacer uno mismo la placa de la casa se van 6 millones de bolívars por lo menos pero con el aporte del programa si se mejoró algo, la pieza la está ocupando un hijo y después va a ser la bodega. *It costs about six million bolivars to build the roof, but with the support of the program, it somehow improved. My son now occupies the room, which will become a store in the future.*
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
Si ha cambiado. Porque ya hay una parte donde vive tranquilo mi hijo. *Yes, I have changed, because there is a space where my son can live quietly.*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
Buenos son los que se hicieron en el Consejo Municipal pero son mejores los de vivienda porque nos falta mucho para aprender. *The workshops that were held at the municipality (citizenship education) were good but the ones that were related to housing are better because we still have a lot to learn.*

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Se tienen muchas prácticas que deberían ser cada tres meses porque se orienta más y se familiarizan más las personas que están involucradas con el crédito, con todo el equipo de Ciudadanía tanto con los miembros del grupo de la comunidad.

The exercises should be done every three months because they are useful to connect people who are involved with the credit program with the team of Ciudadanía and with the members of the community group.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Desearía que fueran más continuos.

I wish they had more continuity.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Tengo 34 años de casado y nunca he tenido una mala palabra con mi esposa, y con los talleres uno se sensibiliza. A pesar de que soy un campesino con sexto grado, mi papa nos enseñó mucho del hogar. Cuando mi señora se pone brava espero unos días para hablar con ella.

I have been married for 34 years and have never had a bad word with my wife. In the workshops, there is consciousness building. Even though I am a peasant who only finished elementary school, my father taught us a lot at home. If my wife gets upset, I wait a few days to talk to her.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

La experiencia es que tenemos que cristalizar gente que sean pagadores, que se comprometan y que sean comprometidos a lo que se están comprometiendo, porque algunos han fallado.

The experience is that we have to transform people to be better clients, who are committed, because some of them have failed.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Algunos del grupo son buenos, personas que pagan y otros que no, no sé porque.

Some members of the group are good people who pay and others who do not, I do not know why.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

En la remodelación de la construcción, mejorar la construcción.

I see problems in the construction quality of buildings.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Yo puedo llevar a un amigo que está interesado en participar.

I can bring a friend who is interested in participating.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Si. Siento que puede uno participar en algunas actividades, pues porque se conoce la gente y uno se da cuenta como es la gente.

Yes, I do. I think one can participate in some activities, because people can get to know each other and realize how they are.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Si es importante. Como te dije, porque así es como uno conoce cuál es la gente responsable y cual no lo es.

Yes, it is important. As I told you, because in that way one get to know whose people is responsible and who does not.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

No y no quiero pertenecer a ninguna.

Not, we do not, and I do not want to belong to any group.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

Porque he visto que la gente que está allí es muy irresponsable, y he tenido mala experiencia con esa gente, he estado por acceder a cargos pero me he decepcionado.

I have seen people who are irresponsible, and I have had bad experiences with them. I almost had a position in the group but I was disillusioned.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

No.

No, I am not willing to.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Si. La asociación de vecinos y deportiva.

Yes I do. There is the neighbors and sport association.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Claro. Quiero construir el tanque para el agua.

Sure. I want to build the water tank.

INTERVIEW 14
BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Fue beneficioso y siempre he estado con la inquietud de continuar. Quedé satisfecha. Me quedó una mejora que nunca pensé tenerla y con eso puedo subsistir.

It was beneficial and I have been with the interest to continue. I was satisfied. I accomplished the improvement that I never thought I would and with that, I could subsist.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

No recuerdo. En verdad, no recuerdo.

I do not remember. Really, I do not remember.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Claro. Yo tenía unos recursos, una puerta, una ventana. Lo tenía muerto allí y por eso me animé. Yo siempre llamo y me dicen que me espere. Hablé con M que andaba censando. Iba a llamarla porque me dijo que estaba escribiendo a los que quedaron bien. Ahora me beneficio con Mercal (con el crédito logró habilitar un espacio para una tienda de víveres y productos del gobierno nacional).

Sure. I had some resources, a door, a window. Since I had them, I felt motivated. I always call and they tell me to wait. I spoke with M who was doing a census. I was going to call her because she told me that she was registering the ones who did well. Now I benefit with Mercal (with the credit the person managed to organize a space for a food store supplied with products by the national government).

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Sí, porque lo que yo tenía allí no tenía ningún valor. Era solo una pieza (habitación) de bloques (sin frisar). Ahora es más beneficiosa. Ya ese terreno tiene más valor. Como yo misma me apoyo. Si él me da (esposo) una opinión yo no la quiero. El nunca se opone a nada. Se ve un cambio.

Yes, because what I had there had no value. It was only one room made out of blocks (unfinished). Now it is more beneficial. That land has more value. As I support myself. If he (husband) gives me an opinion, I do not want it. He never opposes. I see the change.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Si contribuyó. Bueno... los hijos míos opinan bien de CP. Muchas personas opinan bien porque ya no hay tres latas de zinc, mejoró algo. Los que tenían sus cursos se iniciaron con más propiedad, económicamente.

Yes, it contributed. Well... my sons think well of CP. Many people think well because there do not have zinc metal roofing anymore. Something has improved. The ones who attended the workshop initiated their endeavors with more strengths, and economically.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Todo bien. Fueron bien.

They were all fine.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Bien. Nos pusieron a nosotros a hacer ejercicios. Que cuando agarráramos el dinero aprendieran a ahorrar. Bueno, porque yo ahorro. Con MERCAL logro ahorrar. Entonces me voy al centro, compro algo a dos y lo vendo a 5, con las ganancias.

Good. They made us make exercises. That when we finally received the money, we should learn to save. Well, because I save. With MERCAL I can save with the profit. Then I go to downtown, buy something at two Bs. and sell it at five Bs.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Igual, bien.

The same (nothing), it was fine.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Así no hubiese hecho los cursos, yo igual comparto todo; con la familia, las amistades. Mi corazón se presta para eso. Que mis hijos no se metan, yo con mis ganancias hago. Yo doy pero que no espero que me den a cambio. Con los vecinos, fíjate, a la vecina la ayude con la licuadora. Yo no la necesita más que ella que tiene dos muchachos y se la presté y que no me la devuelva que yo no la uso. No tengo problemas Yo los aprecio a todos con la compra de Mercal. Los vecinos vienen y me ayuda. Hasta un borrachito viene y yo lo ayudo, me barre el patio y le doy comidita. Ayudo mucho. Me encanta hacer esas cosas No me gusta la venganza.

Even if I had not attended the workshops, I equally share all; with the family, with the friends. My heart does it. I with can use my profits and I ask my children not to bother me. I give but I do not expect anything in return. With my neighbors, you see, I helped my neighbor with the blender. I do not need it more than she does. She has two boys and I lent it and she can keep it, I do not use it. I do not have problems. I appreciate them for their purchases at my Mercal. They also come and help me. There is a drunk person who comes and I help him, he sweeps my patio the patio and I give him some food. I help a lot. I like to do those things and I love it. I do not like the revenge.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Éramos tres. Trabajamos bien y todos quedamos satisfechos.

We were three. We worked fine and we all were satisfied.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Ahora, desde que hicimos el curso no nos hemos visto más, pero si la vuelvo a ver, igual la saludo. La otra es buena, buena amiga, pero no la veo mucho. Desde antes del programa, cuando hicimos los grupos yo quedé por fuera. Ella me dijo que me uniera a ellas. Había mucha desconfianza en ese momento. Mi amiga me metió porque me conocen mucho.

Now, since we did the course, we have not seen each other anymore, but if I see her again, equally I greet her. The other is a good person, good friend, but I do not see her that much. Before the program, when we did the groups I remained outside. She told me to join them. There was a lot of distrust at that moment. My friend put me in the group because they knew me a lot.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

La cañada se sube media pared. Ya tengo todo bien alto, en el frente y en la parte de atrás también. Ahorita el agua llega un día si, un día no, bueno para que pueda hacer agua. El aseo (servicio de basura) pasa a veces.

The cañada reaches up to the middle of the wall. I keep everything higher, the front and the patio too. Now a day the water comes every other day. The garbage collection comes occasionally.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Si hay voluntad y todo es la voluntad. El que quiere puede.

If there is will and all is the will. The one that wants can.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Si, claro. El que no quiere participar no participa. Por ejemplo, si hay unos obreros y hay calor, unos no van pero hay otro que ese si recoge dinero como sea y va y compra los refrescos. Ese si quiere, no había excusa.

Yes of course. If someone does not want, he will not participate. For example, if there are some workers and it is hot, one does not go but there is one who collects some money and buys some sodas for everybody. He really wants: there is no excuse.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Si, es importante., porque se beneficia uno mismo.

Yes, it is important because one benefits.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Muy poco. La junta comunal de aquí, eso como que no funciona. Hacen reuniones cuando quieren lanzarse o que voten por ellos. No hacen nada. Para eso es que nos citan a uno. Ponen un aviso aquí en la tiendita.

Very little. The communal council from here, that does not work. They do meetings when they want to be elected and look for our votes. They do not do anything. For that is why they call us. They put an announcement here in the little store.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Desde que yo hice CP más nadie ha dicho nada ¿A dónde las hacen (las reuniones)? Nunca me han citado. Que debieran de decirme de ir a tal reunión. Ellas no me dicen nada nunca. Hace poco nos anotamos para apoyar a los que nos afecta la cañada, pero nada.

Since I was in CP no one has said anything about it. Where are the meeting held? I have never been informed. They should let me know about the meetings. She never tells me. Recently we sign to support those affected by the cañada, but nothing happened.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

(No pertenece) Yo por la edad no estaría metida en eso. Y también porque estoy ocupada y no tengo con quien dejar a la muchachita (nieta que cuida).

(The person does not participate).I, because of my old age, am not involved in that; and also because I am busy and I do not have anyone to take care of my little granddaughter.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

No, por mi edad y porque estoy ocupada.

No, I am not willing to participate because of my age, and because I am busy.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Sola al consejo comunal, si porque yo no sé que les pasa.

Only the communal council, but I do not know what happens to them.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Yo ando detrás. Yo siempre voy para allá (al Sami) para mejorar el negocio para ampliarlo, para meter unas cosas.

I am looking forward. I always go to Sami, because I want to expand my store, to sell more things.

INTERVIEW 15
BARRIO MIRAFLORES

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Nos sirvió de mucho. Aprendimos muchas cosas que nos hacían falta; a comunicarnos unos con otros, a vernos unos a otros de un punto de vista distinto. El modo de tratarse. En ese momento no había desigualdad, nos sentíamos unidos.

It helped us a lot. We learned many things we needed; to communicate with each other, to look at each other despite differently; the way to be treated. At that moment we were equal, we felt united.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

No recuerdo.

I do not remember.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Cuando eso hice una pieza (habitación) y la cocina. Si mejoró, esta es una casita de INAVI, traía solo dos piezas. En ese tiempo alcanzó, luego todo vino en aumento y hubo escasez.

At that time, I added a room and the kitchen. The house improved, this little house was built by INAVI. I had only two spaces. By then, it was enough, but later everything increases its cost and there was scarcity.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

My familia estaba muy agradecida. Éramos cinco niños (hijos) y todos dormíamos en una habitación. Ahora las niñas están en una habitación y los niños en la otra. Mi mujer está contenta. Los niños me dicen que quieren otra pieza, especialmente mi hija que ya tiene quince años. Poco a poco, imagínate, ya piensan de otra manera.

My family was very thankful. We were five children and we all used to sleep in one room. Now the girls are in their own room and the boys in theirs. My wife is happy. The children tell me that they want another room, especially my daughter, which is already fifteen years old. Little by little, imagine, they grow and think differently.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Si, porque ahora hay más espacio en la casa. Si ha mejorado. Les di a entender a ellos (a la familia) que debemos relacionarnos con las personas, con los vecinos, de cómo relacionarse, tener un trato bien, no ser enemigo de las personas. Si no hay motivo es mejor si tratamos bien. No he pedido otro (crédito) porque tengo dificultad.

Yes, because now there is more space in the house. It has improved. I explained them (to my family) that we should relate to other people, with the neighbors, how to relate, to have a proper attitude, not to be an enemy of other people. If there is no reason, it is better if we conduct ourselves. I have not asked for another (credit) because I have difficulty.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

En ese tiempo, era muy importante. Todos llegaban con otro punto de vista. Salía uno con otra perspectiva, ¿será? ¿Qué vas a hacer? Después que íbamos al taller, salíamos diciendo que era muy bien.

At that time, it was very important. Everybody arrived with a distinct point of view. We left with another perspective, would be it? What are you going to do then? After we left the workshop, we used to say it was very good.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

No recuerdo mucho. Allá nos trataron bien. Hablamos sobre el compartir. Hoy en día la gente no comparte, no. Se ha perdido eso. Ahora ni el café le brindan a uno.

I do not remember much. They treated us nicely. We talked about sharing. Now a day, people do not share. It has been lost. People do not ever you offer a coffee.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Bien, no (nada).

Nothing.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Si mejoré en el trato a mi familia, a mis hijos dedicarles más amor, más tiempo. De mucho trabajar, a veces no nos da tiempo. Aunque sea después del trabajo hay que dedicarles a menos media hora. Con los vecinos siempre bien, en cosas que puedo ayudar, ayudo.

Yes, I improved my attitude toward my family, my children, to give them more love, and more time. Of a lot work, at times us not time gives. Although it be after the work one must dedicate them to less half an hour. With the neighbors always well, in things that I can help, I help.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Esa participación estuvo bien. En esa participación se escogió uno al otro, por nivel de confianza. Como nos conocíamos cada quien se agarró al otro. Había mucha incógnita, si vos no pagas, entonces yo pago. Siempre hay gente que se quedó con los cobres (el dinero), incluso hasta ni mejoras hicieron.

That kind of participation was fine. In that participation, people chose each other, based on their level of confidence. Because we knew each other, we grouped. We had a lot of doubts, if you do not pay, then I pay. There were people who kept the money, and did not do their improvements.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Estuvo Bien. No tuvieron inconvenientes, nos comunicábamos casi siempre.

It was fine. They did not have any inconvenience, we communicate with each other almost all the time.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

Aquí en el barrio, es el agua, como en toda Maracaibo. El gas sale solo en el recibo, pero no en la tubería. Nunca más llegó.

Here in the barrio the water is the problem, as in the rest of the city. The domestic gas appears only in the bill but not in the pipe. We have never had the service.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

La gente, la última vez que dijeron de hacer una reunión para ir a una empresa (proveedor de servicio), si fuimos. Yo también voy. Luego vinieron a revisar y a los dos días no había nada. El consejo comunal de ahora que antes era la asociación de vecinos.

The last time someone said there was a meeting to go to a service provider, we went. I also go. They came to do the work and, in two days, they left. The current communal council is the former neighborhood association.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Nos enseñó a trabajar en grupo, ahora nos convocamos unos a otros. Bueno... de cien al menos que vayan diez. Y uno solo es el que habla.

We learned to work in groups. Now we call each other and meet. Well, at least from a hundred, ten people go. Only one person speaks.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Si, es muy importante, como dicen, al haber mayoría, hay más voluntad. En la union, está la fuerza.

determination. In the unity, we find the strength.

Yes, it is very important, as they say: when we have a majority, there is more

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

No pertenezco, colaboro con ellos. Cuando me exigen, cuando me piden un favor, porque tengo un carrito. Si no me tengo que beneficiar más bien aprovechar que tengo el tiempo, yo no les cobro. A mí también me interesa. Un día aquí faltaban los bombillos en la calle, nos reunimos en Enelven (proveedora), ellos vinieron y colocaron las pantallas.

I do not belong to any group, but I collaborate with them, when they asked me a favor, because I have a little car. I do not need to make profit out of it, I use the spare time I have and I do not charge them. I also benefit from that. One day, the streetlights were out; we gathered and went to Enelven (electricity service provider). They came and got them fixed.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Como colaborador.

I collaborate.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

Siempre he colaborado. Tengo dieciséis años en la comunidad. He estado siempre en eso.

I have always collaborated. I have sixteen years living in the community. I have always been on that.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

No, porque a veces para eso exige más tiempo, y también por el grupo de familia que tengo. Tengo que aprovechar el tiempo. Tengo tres en el liceo y dos en primaria. Pega mucho.

Not, because it requires time to do it, and due to personal reasons. I have to make good use of the time. I have three kids in high school and two in elementary school. It is hard.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

No, solo colaborando en cuestiones en que haya tiempo.

No, I am not. I only collaborate if I have the time.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Todo está en el consejo comunal.

Everything is about the communal council.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Deberían de llamar a otro diálogo, otras reuniones. Aquellos que quedaron mal no querrán ir, así como otros que quedaron fuera. Yo quisiera seguir arreglando la casa y hacer la cerca (es de metal de desecho en mal estado).

They should initiate another dialogue, other meetings. Those who failed will not go, as well as those whose applications were rejected. I would like to continue the improvements of my house and build the fence (it is made out of disposed metal roof sheeting).

INTERVIEW 16
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Bien, la verdad es que sí. Mucha gente, empezando por mí, estamos bien y ojalá que sigan así para que mejoremos mucho más. Para mejorar la situación y la casa, por lo menos yo busco mejorar mi manera de vivir. Ya yo cerré mi contrato en la primera etapa, pero hay unos del grupo que se han retrasado mucho en el pago y lo que dañan es mi imagen y a los que hemos quedado bien.

Well, the truth is yes. Many people, including me, are well and I hope that it continue like this so that we can improve a lot more. To improve the situation and the dwelling, at least I seek to improve my way of living. I already closed my contract in the first phase, but there are some people in the group that have delayed a lot in their payments and they damage my image and that of those who have remained well.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

No recuerdo.

I do not remember.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Sí. Mejoró en el sentido de que lo quería para hacer un baño dentro de la casa.

Yes. It has improved because I wanted to build a bathroom inside the house.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Ellos están de acuerdo conmigo y me han ayudado a pagar.

They agree with me and they have helped me paying back as well.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Sí. La última vez que yo fui fue un taller en Bella Vista y yo les conté. Incluso fueron conmigo a la entrega del crédito con el alcalde.

Yes. The last time I attended was a workshop in Bella Vista and I told them about it. They even went with me to receive the credit from the hands of the city mayor.

- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
 Es un aprendizaje que uno recibió allí. Por lo menos las cosas que uno no tenía en mente las recibió. *We got a learning there. At least, those things that one does not have in mind, we got them.*
- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**
 Sí recuerdo algo, que ahí nos decían que uno tenía que mejorar su vivienda, etcétera, etcétera. *Yes, I remember something, that they told us there that one has to improve one's house, etc, etc.*
- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**
 No, la verdad yo aprendí más de lo que tenía en mi mente aprender. *Nothing, the truth is that I learned more than I was expecting to learn.*
- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**
 Sí, con mis vecinos no he tenido ningún problema; tu sabes... que el vecino más cercano es como familia de uno, donde quiera que he vivido me he llevado bien con mis vecinos. *Yes, with my neighbors, I have had no problem; you know... that the closest neighbor is like a relative of mine, wherever I have lived. I have got along well with my neighbors.*

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?**
 Con ellos bien, muy amables, me enseñan, uno habla, echa bromas. *With them (the group), very kind, they teach me, one speaks, make fun.*
- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**
 Yo les digo que se daña la imagen de ellos mismos y la mía también. Como yo me atrasé porque tenía un familiar enfermo, pero llamé a mi hija y le dije que debía tanto, que estaba retrasada en el pago, y ella me depositó lo último que debía. *I tell them that their image is also affected, and mine as well. I delayed because had a sick relative, but I called my daughter and I told her that I owed a lot and that I was delayed in the payments. She gave me the last amount that I owed.*

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

El aseo, yo todos los meses pago el recibo de la luz y ahí estoy pagando el aseo y lo único que quiero es que pase por aquí. El aseo pasa cada quince días entonces uno tiene que comprar bolsas para amarrar la basura.

The cleanness, I pay the electricity bill every month and with it, I am paying the garbage collection and the only thing I want is that it comes around here. The garbage collection comes every fifteen days and I have to buy more bags.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Que tomen conciencia de que los que vivimos en el barrio también somos gente. No solamente los que viven en las urbanizaciones tienen derecho, uno también. Ahorita, no está en mis manos hacer nada. Yo oí en la televisión que los contratistas no estaban tratando a los trabajadores (del aseo) como debían si ellos recogen la basura merecen un trato bien, sus mascarillas, sus guantes y estaban recogiendo la basura sin nada; y ellos son gente igual que uno.

That people recognize that those who also live in the barrio are people as well. Not only the ones that live in the urbanizations have rights, one also have. Right now, it is not in my hands to do something. I heard on TV that the contractors were not treating the workers (garbage collection system) as they should; if they collect the trash they deserve a better treatment, masks, gloves. They were collecting the trash without anything; and they are people as we are.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Sí. Este barrio es un barrio nuevo y prácticamente tiene todos los servicios.

Yes, the barrio is a recent barrio and practically has all the services.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Sí. Porque los vecinos todos se juntan cuando hay que pensar en lo que se tiene que hacer para que vengan los servicios. Siempre que pasan las voces diciendo que hay reunión todos estamos allí presente. Uno siempre anda pisando los talones del presidente (de la asociación de vecinos) diciéndole que pasó porque anda tan tranquilo.

Yes. Because all the neighbors gather when we have to think in what has to be done so that the services come to the area. Every time we hear that there is a meeting, we are present. One always is behind the president (of the neighbors association) asking him about what happens and why he is so quiet.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Sí, mis hijos pertenecen a las Misiones. *Yes, my sons are part of the Missions.*

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Un hijo mío es jefe de cuadra en la Misión. *One of my sons is the coordinator of this block in the Mission.*

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

Ellos tienen dos años con la misión “Barrio Adentro”, y han avanzado. *They have been in the Mission “Inside the Barrio”, and have improved.*

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

No aplica. *It does not apply.*

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

No aplica. *It does not apply.*

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Las misiones, tenemos un módulo de Barrio Adentro aquí en el barrio. *The Missions. We have an Inside the Barrio Module in the barrio.*

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

No, no me siento en la capacidad de volver a meterme, me gustaría pero no puedo. Me hubiese gustado hacer otro cuarto en mi casa. *No, I do not feel well about my capacity to apply again. I would like to but I cannot. I would have liked to add another room to my house.*

INTERVIEW 17
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Bueno, la verdad es que a mi me ha gustado mucho eso porque me ha enseñado como ahorrar, como tratar de conseguir el dinero de otras maneras. Todo bien. No me dieron la cantidad que esperaba pero fue mucho lo que pude hacer. Aprendí muchísimas cosas.

Well, the truth is that I have liked a lot because I have learned about saving, how to find the resources in a different way. Everything was fine. I did not receive the amount I needed but I could accomplish a lot. I learned many things.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

No me acuerdo, yo sé que el señor Jesús viene del SAMI, de la alcaldía.

I do not remember. I know that mister Jesus comes from the SAMI, from the Municipality.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Sí, muchísimo, me prestaron para el baño, pero como no me siguieron prestando por la cuestión de que los demás quedaron mal yo seguí ahorrando mi dinero como si yo estuviera pagando (el crédito). De hecho, ahorre más y agrandé la cocina, hice un cuarto, sigo pa'lante con todo y sin préstamo. Aprendí a ahorrar, a mantener el ahorro porque hasta me abrieron una cuenta de ahorro en el banco.

Yes, a lot, they lent me to add the bathroom, but since they did not continue lending me because the others behaved wrongly, I continued saving my money as if I were paying (the credit). In fact, I save more and I enlarged the kitchen, I built a room, and continued ahead with all and without loan. I learned to save, to maintain the savings because to me they opened a savings account in the bank.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Estamos todos muy contentos, sobre todo mis hijas, porque el baño que arreglé fue el de las muchachas y en comparación si le toman una foto...

We are all very happy, mainly my daughters, because the bathroom that was fixed was the girls' and, in comparison, if you could take a picture...

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Gracias a Dios somos una familia unida que hemos tenido mucha comunicación.

Thanks to God, we are a united family that have had a lot of communication.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

A mí me parecieron fabulosos. Aprendí mucho, fueron creo que cuatro (talleres) y después otros, de los primeros nos enseñaron como ahorrar, como saber cómo íbamos a administrar el dinero, como íbamos a mejorar, que lo que íbamos a hacer lo empezáramos bien. Y de los segundos talleres, ver bien como iba a trabajar el albañil, como íbamos a hacer las mejoras sin que en un futuro se nos dañaran. Yo empecé con zinc y ahora vamos con platabanda. ”

They seemed fabulous to me. I learned a lot, they were four (workshops) and later others, I believe. From the first ones they taught us how to save, how to administer the money, how we were going to improve, that what we were going to do we should do it well. From the second workshops, (I learned) to supervise the builder's work, how we were going to do the improvements preventing future damages. I began with zinc roofing and now we go for concrete roofing.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

(Respondió en su comentario de la pregunta anterior).

(The person answered it in the previous question).

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Nada le agregaría ni le quitaría.

I would not add or take out anything.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Sí, muchísimo, me dio mucha desilusión el ver que los que pudimos pagar bien y ellos que tienen las maneras de cómo pagarlos no lo hicieron. Porque la verdad es que si los pudieron pagar bien pero no quisieron, por lo menos una señora tiene dos entradas de dinero, ella trabaja y su esposo también con sus quincenas y beneficios.

Yes, it changed a lot. I was disillusioned when I sawt those who paid on time, including me, and those who have the way to do it din't. Because the truth is that they could pay well but they didn't want to. At least one woman has two sources of income, she works and her husband does either, using their two incomes and additional benefits.

La relación cambió porque una de las del grupo nos dejó de tratar y el otro también porque nosotros les decíamos que por que no pagaban y ella decía que en diciembre con sus utilidades terminaba de pagar el préstamo, que eso no era problema de nosotros. Con el otro miembro hemos continuado la relación pero no sabíamos que él no había terminado de pagar, de hecho se compró un carro y siguió construyendo, entonces no nos explicamos por qué.

The relationship changed because one person in the group stopped the relationship and the other member too, because we told them that because they did not pay and she said that in December she would finish paying the installments, that that was not our problem. With the other member, we have continued the relationship, but we did not know that he had not finished paying back. In fact, he bought a car and continued building the addition. We do not know why.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Por una parte bien, pero por otra parte me gustaría que fuera sola porque yo tengo como responder. Con gente como la señora Graciela o mi comadre podría ser.

In one hand, it was well, but on the other hand, I would like to go alone because I can respond. With people as misses Graciela or my godmother, it could be.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Ver respuesta a la pregunta 9.

Refer to answer to question 9.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

Bueno, ahorita en verdad el problema más grande que hay es el de las cloacas. Nos mandaron a pegar pero de hecho eso no tiene donde llegar, no hay el bombeo, no se cómo es la cuestión pero eso a veces se tapa y empieza a salir de eso por todas las calles. Otra es la inseguridad y el aseo, que nunca pasa por aquí, solamente cuando viene el gobernador o el alcalde, de resto hay que pagar hasta dos veces a la semana para que los niños me boten la basura, entonces me di cuenta de que la van a tirar es en la cañada.

Well, right now, in reality, the biggest problem here in the barrio is the sewers. They let us connect to the system but, in fact, it doesn't connect to any thing, and there is no pump, I do not know how it works but at times the streets overflow. Another problem is the insecurity and the garbage collection that never comes around here, only when the governor or the major come. One must pay twice a week so that the children take away the trash. I later realized that they throw it in the cañada.

Todo el mundo bota la basura en la cañada.

Everyone disposes the trash in the cañada.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

La solución que creo es que llevemos la basura a un contenedor, lo hago yo pero los demás no. Yo apoyara a la asociación de vecinos en lo que pudiera, antes trabajaban bien pero ahora no.

I believe that the solution is to carry the trash to a container, I do it but the others not. I would support the neighborhood association in everything I could. They used to work well but now they do not.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Sí, bueno, porque con eso yo he sido como un portavoz, como a mí me fue bien y me sentí satisfecha con lo que hicieron. Yo he seguido transmitiendo lo mío a otros vecinos y ellos lo han captado.

Yes, well, because with that I have been like a spokesperson, as it was fine and I felt satisfied with what they did. I have been communicating my experience to other neighbors and they have acknowledged it.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Siempre, yo pienso que si no hay una comunidad unida no echa nada para adelante. De hecho cada vez que ese señor (presidente de la asociación de vecinos) ha llamado para una reunión, todo el mundo ha ido, pero desde que ha pasado lo de las cloacas la gente no quiere ir porque no dan ninguna solución.

Always, I think that if the community is not united together, anything is accomplished. In fact, each time that that mister (president of the neighborhood association) has called for a meeting, everyone has gone, but since the problem with the sewers, people does not want to go because they do not offer any solution.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

No... Nunca.

Not... we have never.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

Por el poco tiempo que tenemos para eso.

Due to the lack of time that we have to commit.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

A mí me gustaría pero la cuestión es el tiempo, como tengo una bebé de dos años que se enferma me ocupa tiempo.

I would like to but the problem is the time, since I have a two- year's old baby that gets sick, it demands time.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Creo que sí hay más que todo organizaciones políticas, deportivo, también veo que juegan los muchachos de aquí con los de otros barrios...

I think that there are political and sportive organizations. I also see that kids from this barrio play with others from other barrios...

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Claro, porque me parece que dan una facilidad de pago muy cómoda, los intereses son bastante bajos, en verdad quedé satisfecha. A mí me gustaría continuar para echar la plaquita en el porche y pegarla con la cerca. Los arquitectos dan ideas fabulosas.

Clearly, because it seems to me that they offer appropriate ways to pay, the interests are quite low, in reality, I was satisfied. I would like to continue building the roof of the front porch and the fence. The architects give fabulous ideas.

INTERVIEW 18
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Todo bien. *Everything was fine.*
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
(No recuerda). *(The person does not remember).*
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Sí. Porque ya tenemos un primer paso, pudimos comprar los materiales para hacer una pieza. *Yes, because we have accomplished a first step. We could afford to by the construction supplies to build an addition.*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Todo bien. *Everything was fine.*
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
Recibimos muchos talleres. Yo participé en todos. Es una experiencia en la que uno aprende cosas que no sabía, porque uno piensa que con tener una sola pieza uno está bien porque no le importa, pero a través del taller nos enseñaron como debe ser una casa, con los niños aparte, el matrimonio aparte. *We attended many workshops. I participated in all of them. It is an experience in which one learns things that didn't know before, because one thinks that by living in a single space, one is well, because one doesn't care, but in the workshop they taught us how a house should be, with the children and the parents in different rooms.*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
(Respondió en su comentario de la pregunta anterior). *(The person answered it in the previous question).*

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Yo guardo todos los papeles que me dieron, el papel donde dibujamos la casa. Nos enseñaron como va uno a pagar el crédito. Yo le digo a los compañeros que no pagaron que problemas tendrán los demás porque yo no tengo problemas. En los talleres nos dijeron que si no pagaban dos o tres los demás tendríamos que esperar. Más bien esto para mí sería como un milagro de Dios, a mi me dijeron que me faltaba un taller y yo fui hasta allá a hablar con la secretaria para cumplir y cumplí..

I keep all the works that gave me, the piece of paper where we draw our house. They taught us how we were going to pay the credit. I tell my friends who did not pay that everybody else would have problems but not me. In the workshops, we were told that if two or three did not pay the others would have to wait. Moreover, this, for me, would be like a miracle of God, I was told that I missed a workshop and I went there to speak with the secretary to do it and I did..

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Nada.

Nothing.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Sí, nos llevamos mejor.

Yes. We get along very well.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Me fue bien. La señora Y me dice que no me puedo quedar afuera, que continúe para que tenga mi casa.

It was well. Ms. Y tells me that I cannot remain out of the group that I should continue so that I have my own house.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Como te dije antes...

As I told you before...

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

Las cloacas ya están pero no están funcionando como debe ser, necesitamos un dispensario, para uno dirigirse en un momento de una emergencia.

The sewer is installed, but it is not working properly. We also need a health facility, which we can use in case of emergency.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Apoyar en las regiones y a la gente que puede ayudar, pero hace falta unidad porque hay gente que quiere que en una o dos reuniones ya esté todo hecho. Uno debe asistir y asistir hasta lograrlo. Así como esto duro un año cuando me censaron y yo quería ver todo de una vez. Pero las casas esas que vienen hechas de una vez (IVIMA) no me dan el crédito si no tengo un mejor trabajo. La gente me decía que si tenía una pieza no me bajaban el crédito y yo pensé que no me podía meter en algo que no iba a poder pagar.

By supporting in the regions and to the people that I can help we need unity unit because there is people that want to accomplish everything in one or two meetings. One should attend and attend until achieving it. Like this, it lasted a year when I was surveyed and I wanted to see all right away. However, for those houses that are fully built (by IVIMA) I do not receive a credit if I do not have a better job. People told me that if had a single space house I would not get a loan, and I thought that I could not demand something if I was notable to pay in return.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Sí. Yo quiero que sigan ayudando para seguir logrando lo que queremos, que seamos ejemplo.

Yes. I expect that the help continue to follow accomplishing what we desire, that we become an example.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Sí, porque así uno le da apoyo a los otros, y orientación también. Todo eso es importante.

Yes, because in that way we support the others, and provide orientation as well. All that is important.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

No.

No, we do not.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

Porque no me gusta, pero si es una reunión yo voy.

Because I do not like it, but if it's a meeting, I go.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

No, solo voy a las reuniones.

No, I am not. I only attend the meetings.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

No.

No, I do not.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Sí, porque yo quiero seguir el paso de ustedes y lograr lo que quiero. Quiero terminar de construir la casa porque uno no sabe lo que puede pasar de la noche a la mañana, quiero dejarle algo a mis hijos, un techo seguro. Por eso es que yo no toqué ni un medio, yo le dije a mi hermano menor que si me lograba esto algún día puede decir que fue alguien que colaboró en esta casita, si tuviera la capacidad le pusiera la placa. Jesús se quedó asombrado porque de los otros grupos la gente tiene la capacidad de pagar con que responder, pero en cambio yo soy una persona que trabaja en casas. Cuando yo debía doscientos mil bolívares mi hermano me ayudó y los muchachos también porque yo les decía que tenía que pagar. Esa noche yo no podía dormir preocupada por ser puntual en el pago, porque sino no tengo derecho a reclamar. Si no pago como le digo a Jesús para reclamarle cualquier cosa.

Yes, because I want to follow your steps and to achieve what I want. I want to finish building the house because one does not know what can happen tomorrow. I want to leave something for my children, a secure ceiling. That is why I didn't touch the money, I told my younger brother that if he helped me to achieve it, one day he would be able to say that he collaborated in this little house. If I could, I would add the concrete roofing. Mister Jesus was amazed because from the other groups where people has the capacity to pay and respond, I simply work cleaning other people's houses. When I owed two hundred thousand bolívares, my brother helped and the boys too because I told them that I had to pay. That night I could not sleep, I was worried about paying on time, because then I do not have the right to complain. If I do not pay how I can approach Mister Jesus to demand him something.

INTERVIEW 19
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Mejoró la familia y la casa. *The dwelling and the family improved.*
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
No recuerdo. *I do not remember.*
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
No. El crédito ese día me lo gasté. *Not. That same day I spent the money.*
Yo mandé a rellenar el terreno con diez viajes de arena, pero lo demás me lo gasté porque tenía un hijo enfermo. A la casa hay que hacerle muchas cosas, hay que subirla porque la acera la hicieron por arriba. Todavía nos falta por pagar mucho, porque nosotros tuvimos un accidente, mi hijo se quemó. *I had my lot filled with earth (ten trucks) but I spent the rest in something else because my son was sick. The house needs a lot of repair; it has to be lifted up to reach the level of the new sidewalk. We still have to pay a lot, because we have a accident, my son was burned.*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Nos enseñaron de las casas, de la construcción, de los trabajadores, como están haciendo su trabajo. *They taught us about housing, dwelling construction, about the proper supervision of the contractors, how they should do their job.*
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
(No supo como responder). *(The person does not know how to answer this question).*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
(Ver respuesta a la pregunta 4). *(Refer to question 4).*
- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**
No responde. *The person did not answer.*

- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**

Nada.

Nothing.

- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**

No responde.

The person does not answer.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?**

Ellos viven por aquí, pero casi no han ido a los talleres.

They live around here, but they have not attended the workshops that much.

- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**

(No respondió) (Indica que no fue valorada la participación de los otros miembros de su grupo).

The person did not answer but was able to suggest that the participation of other members was not valuable.

- 2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?**

El problema son las cloacas que las pusieron pero no funcionan y nosotros estamos preocupados por eso.

The problem here is the sewer which was built but do not work, and we are worried because of that.

- 2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?**

Yo no sé porque toda la gente está callada.

I do not know why all these people remain silent.

- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**

(No respondió).

(The person did not answer).

- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**

Sí, (pero no logra especificar porque).

(The person answered yes but was not able to specify why).

- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**

No.

No, we do not.

- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 No participa. *(The person does not participate).*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
 (No puede especificar porqué). *(The person could not specify).*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
 No. *No, I am not.*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
 No. *No, I do not.*
- 2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?**
 Yo creo que no porque estamos mal. Nos faltan trescientos mil, ahora no puedo. El material que tengo aquí es para subir la casa. Nosotros mismos construimos, pero como aquí nadie trabaja es muy difícil. *I believe not because we are disgraceful. We owe three hundred thousand, now I can't. The construction supplies that I have here is to lift up the house. We build ourselves, but since anybody is working, it is very difficult.*

INTERVIEW 20
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

(El Programa) Comenzó fue por aquí, en 23 de marzo. Fue una experiencia bonita. Nos conocimos, nos hemos ayudado. Los talleres fueron magníficos; tuvimos una convivencia magnífica, nos reíamos y nos tratábamos. Salieron de allí (de los talleres) con la expectativa de querer participar. Formamos un Comité de Salud, estuvimos reuniéndonos para ver que podía salir para nuestra comunidad, cual era nuestra expectativa, ser más participes y colaborativos.

(The Program) began here, in 23 de Marzo. It was a pretty experience. We met and knew each other. We have helped each other. The workshops were splendid, we had a magnificent relationship, we laughed and shared. People left from there (from the workshops) with the expectation to and desire to participate. We form a Committee of Health; we were meeting to see what could come out for our community, which was our expectation, to be more participative and collaborative.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

Vinieron facilitadores, fueron de la alcaldía, o el IMCEC (Instituto Municipal de Capacitación y Educación Ciudadana). Se que vino otras personas que se dedicaron a la formación en el área de participación a la comunidad.

Facilitators came; they were from the municipality, or the IMCEC (Municipal Institute for Training and Citizenship Education). I know that some other people came and offered training on participation to the community.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Sí, claro que sí. Bueno, mira, era de lata el frente (se refiere a la cerca de entrada) y solo estaba techado un cuarto. Tenía que estar pendiente porque yo tengo un hijo especial (con retardo mental) y tenía que estar pendiente para evitar que se quemara (con el sol).

Yes, of course. Well, look, the front was made out of metal plates (refers to front fence) and only one bedroom had roofing. I had to be alert all the time because I have a special son (mentally disable) and had to be alert to prevent that he had sunburns.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Bien, que valió la pena asistir a los seis talleres. Yo venía del trabajo y me iba a los talleres. Mi mamá me decía que porque iba. Yo le digo que si no iba al taller no alcanzaba el objetivo. (¿Cuál objetivo?) De que todas las personas lográramos nuestras mejoras. Nosotros trajimos el programa al barrio, nos quedábamos en los talleres y entramos (en el programa). Y la opción era no fallar a los talleres. Si fallaba no podía continuar.

Well, it was worth to attend the six workshops. I came from my work and went to the workshops. My mother asked me why I had to go. I tell her that if did not go to the workshop I did not reach the objective. (¿What objective?) People could achieve our improvements. We brought the program to the barrio, we remained in the workshops and we entered (in the program). Moreover, the option was to attend the workshops. If I failed, I could not continue.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Sí, bueno, en mi caso tuve más orientación hacia ayudar a otras personas, a cómo dirigirse. Nosotros seguimos el ejemplo e invitamos a las personas y venían personas de otros barrios. De allí venían personas a ver la experiencia de nosotros.

Yes, I do, well, in my case, I had more orientation toward helping other people, on how to approach the program. We followed the example and invited other people and they came from other neighborhoods. People came from there to see our experience.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Fue divertida porque hacíamos juegos para captar la idea que nos quería dar el facilitador; con cosas escritas para que nosotros tomáramos idea. A ver si me acuerdo... más que todo tenía que ver cómo me veía yo, como era mi casa, el futuro, un sueño, y la comunidad también.

It was amusing because we did play to capture the idea that the facilitator wanted to give us; with written things so that we got the idea. Let's see if I remember... more than everything else it was about how I saw myself, how my house was, the future, a dream, and the community also.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Fueron divertidos. Nos fortaleció a los líderes que estábamos allí. Nos fortaleció en como colaborar con otras personas, ser más humanista, menos egoísta.

It was fun. It strengthened the leaders that were there. It strengthened us in how to collaborate with other people, to be more humanitarian, less selfish.

Corregimos las cosas y las queremos para nosotros. Vemos el colectivo.

We fixed the things and we want them for us. We see the collective.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

No. Pienso que de quitar que no solamente fuera cuestiones de proyectos sino que se siguieran dando en las comunidades. Los temas chéveres, ¿de quitarles?, nada, más bien le pondría eso.

Not. I think that if I change something it is that the program was not only about the projects but also about its continuance in the communities. The subjects were nice. To remove from it?, nothing, I would add that.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Si cambió. Bueno, porque (yo) era una persona muy cerrada. Muy poco me conocían. Me abrí más al trabajo comunitario, y fui más comunicativa. Ya no le tengo miedo a asumir esos retos. Antes me cubría más. No tenía esa (actitud) de abrirme a otros espacios. (¿Y con su familia?) Con mi familia también. De hecho, en el taller hicimos una convivencia de cómo quería que mi familia me viera; lo que era sacar ese yo interior.

It changed. Well, because I was a very reticent person. People knew me very little. I changed myself toward the community work, and was more communicative. I am no longer afraid to assume those challenges. Before, I used to hide. I didn't have that attitude to face other spaces. (¿And with the family?) With my family, also. In fact, in the workshop we shared our comments about how we wanted to see our families; and exposed our thoughts.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Muy bien. Conocimos la otra parte del vecino, sentir lo que le está sucediendo. Allí nos dimos cuenta con el grupo. Por ejemplo, ellos no sabían que tenía un hijo especial. Allí llegó una persona, una señora, que dijo que no tenía casa y la ayudamos. (¿Y con su grupo mancomunado?) Con el grupo nos fue bien. Nos conocemos desde antes y seguimos.

It was very well. We met the other side of the neighbor, to feel what is happening to him. There we realized it with the group. For example, they didn't know that I had a special son. There I person arrived, a lady, who said that she didn't have a house and we helped her. (¿And with your group?). It worked well with the group. We knew each other since before and we continue.

- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**
 Éramos seis (miembros del grupo). Si se quiere era de lo mismo. A última hora se retiró una persona por salud y quedamos cinco (se retiró al principio antes de recibir el crédito).
We were six (members of the group). We were like the same. In the last minute one person withdrew due to health problems and five remained (he withdrew at the beginning before receiving the credit).
- 2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?**
 La inseguridad, creo que es el primero. La cañada esta (vive a 20 metros de ella) nos afecta mucho porque botan basura. Falta un trayecto por embaular y hay muchas ratas. Hemos pedido fumigación en la alcaldía, en Salud Maracaibo y nada. Tenemos un módulo de seguridad que no hace nada. Ellos (la policía) no han podido (con la inseguridad).
I believe the insecurity is the first one. This cañada (the person lives at 20 meters from it) affects us a lot because people throw away trash on it. One drainage section is not finished, and there are many rats. We have asked the municipality to clean it, but nothing is done. We have a police module that is not operating. They (the police) have not been able (to confront the insecurity in the area).
- 2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?**
 (Activa) Soy parte del consejo de la comunidad y nos reunimos para ver.
(Active) I am part of the community council and we meet to assess.
- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**
 Completamente. Tengo años en esto. Por eso, me inicio con la fundación del barrio. Era muy cerrada, atendía una que otra vez (a las reuniones), pero si asistía a los talleres y a ayudarnos mucho.
Completely. I have been years in this. I started with the barrio foundation. I was very reserved, I used to attend the meetings occasionally, but recently I attended the workshops and helped a lot.
- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**
 Si es importante, participar, porque nos damos cuenta de las necesidades, el querer mejorar. Contamos con los servicios porque hemos contado con personas que hemos salido a buscar los servicios, el módulo, las casas y la asistencia.
It is important to participate, because we recognize the needs, the desire to improve. We have the infrastructure services because we have counted with people that pursue their construction, the module, the houses, and the assistance.

- Contamos con defensoría del niño y del adolescente, un multihogar, un colegio y un kinder. Nos falta un liceo.
- We count with children protection a daycare, a school and a nursery school. We need a high school.*
- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**
- Yo ahora más recientemente en el consejo de la comunidad. Soy vocera.
- I am part of the community council recently. I am a spokesperson.*
- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
- Soy vocera. Creo que las riendas las llevo yo. De todos los 36 miembros, siempre trabajan de dos, cuatro o seis.
- I am spokesman. I relieve I conduct this myself. From the 36 members, always only two, four or six work.*
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
- Desde la década de 1990.
- Since the 1990s.*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
- No aplica.
- It does not apply.*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
- No aplica.
- It does not apply.*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
- Los Frentes (del Partido de Gobierno), las Misiones, la Universidad del Zulia bastante. De hecho aquí hay un módulo que lo hicieron los de la Universidad.
- I know the Fronts -Los Frentes- (of the Government party), the Missions, and the University of Zulia a lot. In fact, here we have a facility built by the University.*
- 2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?**
- Si. Si hay más posibilidades de que ellos bajen (los recursos). Sino para que tengan más conciencia de todo lo que se está realizando. Por ahora no agarraría más créditos porque ya tengo otra solicitud (en otro organismo que no específica).
- Yes, I would. If there are more possibilities that they can provide (the resources). Also to be more conscious about everything that is being done. For now, I would not get more credits because I have already introduced another application (in another institution that was not specified).*

INTERVIEW 21
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
No me acuerdo. Tengo tiempo que no me visita nadie. *I do not remember. There has been a while that no one visits me.*
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
Me acuerdo de Jesus (asesor económico de la comunidad). Yo se que venía de la alcaldía. Solo me acuerdo de él. *I remember mister Jesús (economic advisor of the community). I know that he came from the municipality. I only remember him.*
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Tenía un ranchito de lata. Logré este (apunta a una pieza de bloque sin frisar), me dieron poquito, 400.000 Bs, y ¿Qué hice yo con eso? ¿Cómo yo? Mis hijos mandarme para terminar. Yo con eso compré material y mano de obra. Bueno, yo cogí ese para no gastar en trabajo. Yo compré eso. *I had a shack of metal. I built this (points at a small room made of block without finishing). They gave me a little bit, 400,000 Bs, and ¿What did I do with that? How I did? My children sent me (money) to finish. I, with that, bought construction supplies and paid the work. Well, I caught that to save in the work. I bought that.*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Bueno... ahhh, que bueno. Ese cuarto de mamá! No tiene piso, no tiene ventanas. Como yo estoy enferma y sola. Este niño (nieto) tiene clase en Caracas. Estoy más segura que con el ranchito. A veces vienen y se quedan (mis hijos). Por lo menos un cuartito y no un ranchito. Hice delante de él y ahorita allí duerme un nieto para no estar sola. *Well... ahhh, what a good thing. That room of mom! It doesn't have flooring, and lacks windows. Since I am sick and lonely. This boy (grandson) go to class in Caracas. I am more secure now than with the ranchito. At times, they come and stay over (my sons). At least I have a small room and not a shack, which. I built it in front of it. Right now, my grandson sleeps in there to give me some company.*

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Fue aquí en el módulo (a menos de 100 metros). Bailamos, muchas cosas, muchas preguntas. Si es bueno. Mucha gente que viene para la alcaldía... no se... (¿En el corazón?) En práctica, bailamos y cantamos. En la casa nada (acerca de que refleja en su familia). Son buena gente.

It was here in the module (at less than 100 meters). We dance, we did many things, and deal with many questions. It is good. Many people that comes for the municipality...I do not know... (¿In the heart?) In practice, we danced and sang. At home nothing (about the effect on the household). They are good people.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Como yo estoy sola casi todo el día mis vecinos están pendientes.

Since I am alone most of the day, my neighbors keep care of me.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Que buenos esos talleres. Todita la gente. Come pan fresco. Que la gente brinda comida y refrescos.

How good these workshops are. All that people. I eat fresh bread. People bring food and refreshments.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Los dejaría igualitos.

I would leave them the same.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Cambio ahh si, ajah! Si (pero no logra especificar porque).

It changed. Ohh...yes! (But cannot specify why).

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Bien, a veces si trabajan, a veces no. Ahorita no se puede. No hay trabajo (fuente de ingresos incierta).

Well, sometimes they work, sometimes they do not. Right now, it is not possible. There are no jobs (uncertain source of income).

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Ese grupo de nosotros bien. Se conocen. Con ese crédito, si sacaron es bien. Éramos tres, somos vecinos. Si nos vemos.

That group of ours is fine. People know each other. With that credit, if they got something is okay. We were three; we were neighbors. We meet.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

En este barrio me dijeron de algo para ayudar a viejitas como yo (refiere a un programa de atención a la tercera edad). No nos visita nadie. Hay agua, se va un día, viene otro día. Cloacas bien, gas bien. *Malandritos*, aquí no duerme así como tiene miedo viernes, sábado, domingo. A veces a la casa tiran piedras, botellas de cerveza. Cuando llueve grande está llenita (el patio) así como un jagüey (laguna). Se va como en tres días (el agua empozada).

In this neighborhood they told me about something to help old people like me (refers to a program of attention to the elderly). Nobody visits us. We have water every other day. The sewer is well; the gas is well. The thieves, here one does ´nt sleep and is afraid on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. At times people throw stones, bottles of beer. When it rains a lot, the lot is full (the patio) like a lagoon. It drains in three days (the water).

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

No sé. Tienen que saber ustedes (se ríe) (es una persona que por edad y soledad no participa).

I do not know. You should know it (and laugh) (the person does not participate because of her age and loneliness).

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

No. No sé. Yo estoy cansadita (cansada por la edad) para eso. No puedo más.

No, I do not know. I am tired (because of her age) to do that. I cannot support it any more.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Si. Se logra ayudar. Tiene que ayudar como dice el presidente: “Yo voy a ayudar al pobre”, pero no ayudan al pobre, pero no ayudan. Yo voy a escribir para el comedor (ya lo hizo), no ayudan. De pura boca para afuera.

Yes. We manage to help. We must help as the president says: “I am going to help the poor”, but they do not help the poor, but they do not help. I am going to write for the dining room (already did it). They do not help. Only words.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Me dijeron (la invitaron). Yo escribo para todo eso (recolección de firmas).

They told me (they invite her). I write for all that (collecting signatures).

- Metó papel para alcaldía (hace solicitudes) para la casa, para los cobres de vieja (programa tercera edad). La gente no viene. *I introduce papers in the municipality (applications) for the house, for the money for old woman (elderly program). They do not come.*
- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
Yo voy para reunión. Yo escribo (firma) mi nombre para todo, ese papel (acta de la reunión). *I attend the meetings. I write (sign) my name for everything (in the meetings).*
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
No pertenece. *I do not belong.*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
Solo voy a reuniones. No me pierdo las reuniones para saber a ver si llega, a ver si no (los cobres)... la pobreza. *I only go to the meetings. I do not miss the meetings so I know if it comes or if it doesn't (the help)... the poverty.*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
No sabe cómo responder. *(The person does not know how to responde).*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
Cobres de viejita por la alcaldía. Metí los papeles para la casita (en IVIMA). No sabe de donde vino, pidieron los papeles. Tiene poco (tiempo). Allá dieron como doce millones (apunta a casa vecina). Papeles para terminar cerca por feo y peligroso. *Money from the municipality for the elderly. I applied for a house (In Ivima). I do not know where it they came from, they asked for the papers. It is recent. There (in a nearby house) they gave twelve million. I gave the applications to finish my fence, because it is ugly and dangerous.*
- 2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?**
Hay no, estoy muy enferma para pedir otro préstamo. Eso sí, baila y comparte. *Oh, no, I do not. I feel sick to apply for another credit. However, I go to dance and share.*

INTERVIEW 22
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Bueno, yo estoy muy contento. Yo no sabía de so, me ha dado un progreso. Por lo menos a mi me hicieron esta casa (se refiere al gobierno y no al programa) y yo quiero ayudar a otros. Ya listo para el otro crédito, para la nueva mejora. Me ha orientado bastante, nos conocíamos con los talleres que nos llevaban.

Well, I am very I please. I did not know about I am, a progress has given me. At least to me, they did me this house (refers to the government and not to the program) and I want to help other. I am ready for another credit, for the new improvement. It has oriented me enough, we knew us with the workshops that carried us.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

A la alcaldía, el representaba el programa (el señor J, el asesor). Ese programa nada más y la comunidad que siempre nos reuníamos.

The Municipality, the person who represented the program (the local advisor). That program only and the community that always gathers.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Yo tenía un ranchito de palo. Logré hacer la cerca aquella (apunta a la cerca lateral) y ese pedacito (apunta a la cerca frontal) porque estaban las cosas muy caras. No alcanzó. No hice nada con la casa, no me alcanzaba. En cambio, esto no. Abrí la cuenta en el banco. Ahora estoy esperando una platica (un dinero) para cancelar eso. Mi esposa falleció y mi hijo mayor también... dos fracasos. Ahorita me estoy recuperando. Porque no alcanzaba y arreglé las puertas, los bloques y las cabillas nada más. Eso ayudó en algo.

I had a little shack. I managed to build that fence (lateral) and that little section in the front fence, because the supplies were very expensive. It was not enough. I didn't do anything in my house, it was not enough. Instead, with this I could. I opened the saving account in the bank. Now I am waiting for some money to cancel that. My wife and my oldest son passed away... two failures. Right now, I am recovering. I fixed the doors; buy the blocks and other construction supplies. That helped a little bit.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Todo bien.

Everything is fine.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Los talleres tuvieron muchas explicaciones, como invertir el dinero en la vivienda, los coroticos (las cosas), la nevera, cosas que le sirvan a uno y no malgastarlo. Y ahorrar siquiera un bolivita diario. A mis hijos los está ayudando el gobierno. Vea aquel rancho (frente a su casa) por los programas de nuestro gobierno que nos ha ayudado mucho, quedan pocos.

The workshops offered many explanations, on how to invest the money in the dwelling, on things we need, the refrigerator, things that serve us and we can reused; and to save at least one bolivar every day. The government is helping my children. See that shack (in front of their house), there are only a few, because of the programs of our government that has helped us a lot.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Está bien. Estuve muy contento. Mucha orientación, cosas que no sabía nunca. Ayudar a otro más necesitado, más enfermo. Se le pone en práctica, los incapacitados. Estamos pendientes, quererse unos a otros. Nada de problemas, todos que seamos igual uno a otro.

It is well. I was very pleased. A lot of orientation, things that we didn't know before. Helping others in need, the sick, or the disable. We put it into practice. We are aware, and love each other. No problems, that we all are equal.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Si cumplíamos todito, todos los que nos dieron créditos, íbamos mujeres y hombres, conversábamos, echaban chistes, hasta de último hicimos dibujos de la casa, nos prohibieron el licor. Salían alegres, ya en último bailábamos, nos enamoramos.

Yes, we followed up everything, all who received credits, all, mwn and women, used to go, we chatted, said jokes, even at last, we drew sketches of the house. We were not allowed to bring licor. We left happy, at the end we danced, we felt in love.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

No, claro... le agrego que sigan para adelante los programas... la alegría, los cursos o el estudio.

I would not... of course. I would add the hope that the programs continue... the joy, the workshops, or the education.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Cambié bastante con mis hijos. Yo me quedo en la casa. Cuando ellos llegan, ya está listo (todo). Nos ayudamos, hemos cambiado bastante. Eso es lo que aprendimos (¿Y con los vecinos?) y con los vecinos, ellos llegan: “me cortaron la luz y no tengo con que pagar”, anímese y pague y no se preocupe sin ningún interés. En aquella casa (en la esquina), yo le di para pagar la luz y le dije que cuando tenga me lo de.

I changed a lot in the relation with my children. I always stay at home. When they come, everything is ready. We help each other. We have changed a lot. That is what we learned (¿And with the neighbors?), with the neighbors, they come and say: "They cut off the electricity and I do not have money to pay", I encourage them to pay and not to worry, I lend them without interest. In that house (at the corner), I gave him to pay the electricity and I told him to pay me back when they have the money.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Son los vecinos que conozco. No.... Son muy buenos (respuesta afirmativa) uno al otro. Nos ayudamos, si él no podía, otro iba, así... unidos.

They are the neighbors I know. Well...They are good people (affirmative answer) one and the other. We help each other, if he was not able to pay; another one went, in this way... together.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Todos unidos.

We have remained all together.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

En el barrio ahorita es la cloaca. Se está desbordando mucho y no lo han venido a arreglar. Por lo demás, todo bien, como ahora estamos con la vaina de la junta, estamos unidos.

In the barrio, right now it is the sewer. It overflows a lot and it has not been fixed. The rest, everything is fine, now that were are in that matter of the council, we are united.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Bueno... nos unimos, hacemos una asamblea. Todos los vecinos del sector (no todo 23 de marzo). Hacemos charlas. Yo hablo y me contestan los otros.

Well...we get together, we do an assembly. All the neighbors of this sector (not from all 23 de Marzo). We organize speeches. I speak and the others respond.

- Yo reúno a la gente. Los invito de casa en casa y se va reuniendo la gente. Habla la hija mía que es vocera principal.
- I gather the people. I go house by house and invite them and they get together. My daughter, who is the main spokesperson, speaks.*
- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**
 Exactamente, bueno, lo mismo, aprobaban los créditos, en los talleres.
- Exactly, well, with the credit approval, and the workshops.*
- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**
 Si, porque si no participamos como vamos a informarnos de los problemas y discutimos los problemas de la comunidad. Si no lo hacemos así no hay nada. No nos escuchan así como hablo con usted, le respondo, y así son ellos.
- Yes, because if we do not participate how are we going to be informed about the problems and discuss the problems of the community. If we do not do it, there is nothing. People do not listen as I speak to you, I answer you, and this is how they are.*
- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**
 Estoy en la junta, ahora mismo soy miembro. Mi hija es la vocera principal. Mi hijo solo nos acompaña.
- I am in the council, right now I am a member. My daughter is the main spokesperson. My son only comes along us.*
- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
 (Activo).
- (Active).*
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 Más recientemente, con nuestro gobierno (Hugo Chávez).
- More recently, with our government (refers to President Chavez).*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
 No aplica.
- It does not apply.*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
 No aplica.
- It does not apply.*

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Vienen del INTI (Tierras) o OMPU (Oficina de Planificación Municipal) cuando es urgente, los esperamos y conversamos con ellos.

They come from INTI (National Land Institute) or OMPU (Municipal Planning Office) when it is urgent. We wait for them and we talked.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Claro que si. Tenemos que seguir, si vienen, como no, los atiendo. Ahora tengo mi casa y necesito otras cosas. Participan más.

Definitely yes. We have to continue, if they come, sure we do, we listen to them. Now I have my house and I need other things. More participation.

INTERVIEW 23
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Fue una gran ayuda. Un día me encontré un ladrón y entonces me dije que tenía que pedir el crédito. Ya se fueron (los ladrones). Ahora estoy encerrada (se refiere a que ahora tiene sus muros frontales y laterales). Para terminar ese lado (el lateral) le pedí prestado a una señora. Fueron un millón (el crédito de CP) y fue suficiente. Mi esposo me ayudó.

It was a great help. One day I found a thief in my property and I said to myself that I needed a credit. They are gone (the thieves). Now, I am protected (with new front and lateral walls). In order to finish a section of the wall I borrow from one lady. It was a million Bolívars (the credit granted by CP) and it was enough. My husband also contributed.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

No me acuerdo, con el grupo... Por Di Martino (alcalde).

I do not remember, with the group... Major Di Martino.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Mi cerca. No tenía. Yo compré este terreno y aquí tenía un ranchito, con mucho sacrificio y con mis hijos (hace referencia a su casa en la actualidad que ha logrado construir con esfuerzo). Una muchacha vino y yo le dije mira mi ranchito (en referencia a su casa) y ella dijo regálamelo entonces. Es una buena (idea).

My fence. I needed it. I bought this land and had a shack, with a lot of sacrifice and with my children (looking at the new house, which represented a lot of effort). One person came, I asked her to look at my little rancho (looking at the house again), and she, ironically, asked me to give it to her as a present. This whole thing is a good idea.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Feliz de la vida porque, hay Dios, yo le decía a mis hijos que miraran como estaba la casa y que teníamos que hacerle cosas y mis hijos me decían: mamá, sí!

I am happy with my life because, oh God, I used to ask my sons to observe how the house was and that we needed to fix things, and my sons responded: yes, mom!

Y yo: aha pero cuando? Si, el hijo mío trabaja en LUZ (la universidad) y me dijo: sí mamá, vamos a hacerlo. Yo decía ahora sí, con el crédito resolví. Dice la gente que no se han conformado con lo que les dieron. Yo si estoy conforme. Tenía un terreno. Ellos (los niños) corrían y se llenaban de barro. Ahora no. Ellos (sus hijos) cuando la vieron se pusieron contentos porque no ves que se metían los ladrones.

I wonder when? My son works at the university and he told me: yes momo, we are going to do it. I used to think yes but with the credit, I finally could. People say that they do not agreed with the amount they received. I am satisfied. I had the land. The kids used to get dirty. Not now. My sons were happy when they realized that I was secured from the thieves.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Ahora no hay confianza. Ahora hay mucho ladrón, me da miedo. Si cambió para bien porque uno vive mejor. No me gusta vivir mal. Me casé y mi esposo me llevó a un apartamento. Estaba joven... él bebía y me lo dejó perder (el apartamento). No mi amor, y mis hijos... estudiando... Mi hermana dijo que comprara este terrenito y yo vine a parar aquí. Yo viví en un rancho, lloraba y luego hice dos piezas. Yo no quería vivir así. Cuando fue eso no tenía. Me dijeron del crédito, mis hijos me respondieron.

Nowaday there is no confidence. There are a lot of thieves, I feel fear. It changed for good because I live much better. I do not like to live poorly. I married and my husband took me to an apartment. I was young... he drank and lost it (the apartment). No my dear, and my children... studying... My sister said that I buy this peace of land and I ended up living here. I lived in a rancho, cried but then I built two spaces. I didnt want to live like that. At that time I didn't have much. They told me about the credit, my children helped me.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Con la gente. Tiraban la pelota. ¿Cómo te sientes? Muy contenta porque fue un beneficio para nosotros. Uno hablaba de otro a otro para beneficio de uno.

With other people. They throw the ball. How do I feel? I am very happy because it was a benefit for us. We talked to each other for our own benefit.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Eso, unos dibujos de cómo quería yo vivir, había que dibujarlo. Era como una escuelita. Era muy bonito.

That thing, some sketches showing the way I wanted to live. We had to draw them. It was like a school. It was very pretty.

- Yo hasta busqué unas revistas para mi modelito y llevé mi trabajo. *I even looked for some magazines and I made a model and brought my work.*
- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**
De los talleres, nada. *From the workshops, nothing.*
- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**
Bien bonitos. ¿Yo? A mí no me gusta el brollo (chismes). Yo, hola y hola, adiós, hasta luego. Me mantengo cerrada (dice no conocer mucho a sus vecinos). No estoy metida. No me gusta. *It is very nice. I do not like gossips. I say hello and hello, bye, and see you later. I keep restrained (the person doesn't know the neighbors that well). I am not involved. I do not like it.*

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?**
Bien, si, yo los conozco. Para allá, lejos, con unas guajiras. Las conozco de vista pero no las trato. *Well, yes, I know them. However, there, I keep away from the guajiras. I have seen them but I do not communicate with them.*
- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**
Cuando pasa (un miembro de su grupo) y me ve, me saluda. Yo con nadie, ni con mi vecina. *When one of them passes by and sees me, he greets. I do not relate with anybody, not even with my neighbor.*
- 2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?**
Las cloacas. Yo las metí (acometida de la casa) cuando eso, porque se revientan allá (en la esquina). Ya le están metiendo mano. *The sewer. I had my house connected to the street system. Now they are repairing it.*
- 2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?**
Nada. No me gustaría meterme en nada de eso. Si no lo hacía cuando jovencita no lo hago ahorita que estoy vieja. Yo no estudié. *Nothing. I would not get involved. If I didn't do it when I was young, not now that I am older. I didn't have education.*

- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**
 (No se acuerda o no sabe responder). *(The person does not remember or does not know how to respond).*
- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**
 Claro que si, por las cosas que están haciendo, es importante. Es bueno que estén metidos en esas cosas, es muy bueno. Se ayudan ellos. *Definitively yes, based on the things that are done, it is important. It is good to be involved in those things. It is very good. They help each other.*
- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**
 No, nada. *No, we do not. We do nothing.*
- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
 Nunca he participado. *I have never participated.*
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 Nunca he participado. *I have never participated.*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
 A mi esposo nunca le gustó que yo estuviera metida por allí, que me dedicara a mis hijos. Un celo con eso y no me gusta andar en esos bululus (reuniones con revuelo). *My husband never liked that I did something else besides taking care of the children. He was very jealous, and I do not like to be in those crowds.*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
 No. *No, I am not.*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
 La junta comunal. La vecina, ella es de la junta. *The communal council. My neighbor is a member.*
- 2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?**
 Me faltan dos cositas en la casa, pero allí me quedo. Me dijeron que en año empezaba a pagar lo que me dio la junta para el piso y tengo que salir de eso primero. *I need two other little things in my house, but I decided to wait. I was told that in one year, I would start paying what the council gave me to do the flooring, and I have to finish with that first.*

INTERVIEW 24
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Para mi, significó que de allí aprendimos muchas cosas, ideas. Me gustó mucho reunirnos, compartir con ellos. Bueno, me gustó mucho. Hubo un momento en que fue muy hermoso, dialogamos, compartimos con ellos muchas ideas, imaginándonos cosas bellas en el futuro, las mejoras. Mire sus casitas, cerquitas y portones muy bonitos.

For my, it represented that in there we learned many things, ideas. I liked to meet a lot and share with them. Well, I liked a lot. There was a moment that was very beautiful, we chatted, we shared with them many ideas, visualizing beautiful things in the future, the improvements. Look at their very little houses, fences, and front doors.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

La alcaldía, estaba la universidad que yo recuerdo.

The municipality, the university, I remember those.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Si claro, o sea en el primer crédito que me dieron, mejoré el baño y el piso de atrás. Eliminé algunas cosas. Volví a remodelar.

Yes, sure. With the first credit they gave me, I remodeled the bathroom and back patio flooring. I removed a few things, and remodeled again.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Me alegré mucho. Quisiera que bajaran más para seguir haciendo cosas. En mi mente está que yo quisiera hacer la cocina. Nos contentamos mucho, que estaba bien.

I was very happy. I would like to take advantage of more credits. I have in my mind that I want to have a kitchen. We were very happy and thought that it was fine.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Si, mejoramos, claro. Yo te digo, estoy pensando, no sé.

Yes, we have improved, in deed. I tell you, I'm thinking, I guess.

- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
 Me acuerdo poquito (no puede responder porque). *I remember just a little (the person does not respond correctly).*
- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**
 No me acuerdo. *I cannot remember.*
- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**
 No puede responder. *The person cannot answer.*
- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**
 Cien por ciento ha mejorado (pero no especifica como). *It has improved a hundred percent (but the person does not specify how).*

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?**
 En el grupo mío eran cinco. Nos fue bien. Cantamos, bailamos, todavía me acuerdo y hecho los chistes. Bien, nos llevamos bien y todavía nos llevamos. *We were five in our group. We did well. We sang, danced, I still remember y talk about it. Good, we still get along with each other.*
- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**
 Yo me imagino que fue igual, bien, digo yo. *I believe that it was the same. It was good, I guess.*
- 2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?**
 El problema ahorita es la inseguridad. Estamos aquí más inseguros que en otra parte. Bueno, teníamos problemas con las cloacas, gracias a Dios lo están reparando. Ahh y terminar con los ranchos porque quedan pocos. *Right now, the problem is the insecurity. Here we are less safe than in other places. We had problems with the sewer. However, thanks to God, they are repairing it. Ahh, and the ranchos that remain, which are just a few.*
- 2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?**
 Bueno, trabajar. Salgo a las instituciones a que me orienten, que me ayuden con el barrio, a veces sola, a veces con el coordinador. *I would work. I go to the institutions to obtain guidance and assistance for the barrio, sometime alone, sometimes with the coordinator.*

En la mayoría de las veces he ido sola. He pedido por mi comunidad. Soy la tesorera de la junta comunal. Antes era colaboradora con la asociación de vecinos. Ahora, estoy más activa.

Most of the time, I have gone alone. I have requested for my community. I am the administrator of the communal council. Before, I was a collaborator of the neighborhood association. Now, I am more active.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Si, en muchas cosas. Ahí aprendí muchas cosas. Que yo tenía que hacer las colaboraciones en la comunidad. Me orientaron mucho. De allí mismo pensé mucho que yo podía meterme muy de lleno y trabajar por mi comunidad.

Yes, it has, in many ways. I learned many things; that I had to collaborate with the community. I also received orientation. From that moment, I thought that I could get fully involved and work for my community.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Claaaro. Eso es importante. Porque allí uno se asesora, uno aprende de otras personas. Nos preguntamos que podemos hacer en las instituciones, no solo adentro sino afuera también. La gente dice: cuanto hay pa' éso, quieren solo plata.

Yes, it is very important, because we receive advising, and learn from other people. We ask ourselves what we can do in the institutions, not only inside but also outside. People say: How much do you have for that? They only want money.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Yo pertenezco y soy la tesorera. Yo sola. Nos dicen que no salgamos, que la gente es muy malagradecida, que tenemos desordenada la casa por andar en la calle, pero que se hace... pa'lante (para adelante).

I belong to the local group and I am the administrator. Just me. They tell me not to get involved because people never value it; that I do not take care of the house because I am on the street. But what can I do? Keep on.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Estoy activa más recientemente.

I am more active recently

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

Hace poco, antes solo colaboraba.

Recently, befote I only collaborated.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

No aplica.

It does not apply.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

No aplica.

It does not apply.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Hidrolago, vino Sagas, el Imau,
Enelven, Ivima, la alcaldía.

*Hidrolago (Water supply company),
Sagas (Gas service), Enerven
(Electricity service), Ivima (Municipal
Housing Institute), the municipality.*

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Si, claro. Me gustó mucho. Así
vuelvo a aprender más, tener más
actividades, más proyectos, claro.

*Yes, of course. I liked it a lot. In that
way I can learn more, have more
activities, more projects, definitely.*

INTERVIEW 25
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Para la economía fue bueno pero lo que pasó es que no alcanzó en nada. Como es posible que me aprobaron 400.000 Bs. No alcanzó. Al final fue para un cuarto y eso quedó así. Cuando vino, por fin me tocó 250, no vino ni la mitad. Yo he levantado esto (la vivienda) a fuerza de trabajo.

It was good for the economy, but what happened is that it was not enough. They only approved four hundred thousand; not much. At the end, it only covered the construction of one room, and that was all I did. However, later, I only received two hundred fifty thousand, less than half. I have raised this (the dwelling) with effort.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

Yo creo que eran organismos que pertenecen a la alcaldía. Yo se que uno son ellos. No sé el departamento. Sé que dictaron esos cursos de plena ciudadanía.

I beleive they were institutions that belong to the municipality, at least one of them. I do not know from what department. I know they teach those courses on full citizenship.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Claro. No mejoró nada, la mayor parte de nosotros y nada. Eso quedó en nada, compre algo de material, unos bloques. No alcanzó para la puerta o la ventana.

In fact, we didn't improved, most of us but nothing. That remained in nothing. I bought material supplies, some blocks. I couldn't afford the door and the window.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Lo mismo. Que íbamos a hacer? Y que eso no, pero bueno... algo que se haga. Faltó de esos mismos pagos. La mayor parte no pagó porque era muy poquito. Algunos no estaban trabajando.

I think the same. What could we do? The majority didn't pay because they thought it was a little amount. Some of them were not working at that time.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

No creo.

I do not think so.

- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
 Claro, como no. En ese momento, uno no se olvida de las cosas. Si uno pagaba la cuestión, recuerdo algo como se iba a hacer la cuestión, formamos un estilo de cooperativa.
Sure. In that moment, one doesn't forget things. If I paid that thing, I just remember how I had to that. We constituted some type of cooperative.
- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**
 Fuimos a los primeros (se refiere a los talleres de ciudadanía) y luego a los segundo de construcción.
We attended the first ones (citizenship education workshops). Later, we attended the construction workshops.
- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**
 Bien. Pues bien. Pero no cumplieron.
They were fine, but people didn't go.
- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**
 De comportamiento, siempre nos hemos reunido, sin embargo, ahorita estamos ya organizados en la junta.
Concerning our behavior, we have always met; nevertheless, right now we are organized in the council.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?**
 Lo que es crédito y lo que hay es que aceptarlo bien, porque los mismos recogíamos una misma idea. De nosotros bien. Nunca hubo.... (¿Qué?) Problemas. Cada quien agarró su cuestión, pero después, no, cada uno por allá.
It is the credit and we have to acknowledge it, because we all had the same idea. We did well. There was... never a problem. Each one took its part, but later, no, everybody apart from each other.
- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**
 Nada (los miembros del grupo no se comunicaban).
Nothing (they didn't communicated among them).

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

Por los momentos, yo creo, todavía hay ranchos y el mejoramiento de ranchos, que hace falta. Estos son los primordiales. Habrá las cloacas pero no es tan primordial.

For now, I believe, there still are ranchos and their improvement is needed. This is fundamental. There is the problem with the sewers but is not a priority.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Vos sabéis que ahorita con el gobierno, están dando casas. Estamos haciendo los trámites. Están introducidos. Hay como 260 en todo el sector. Estamos anotados para recibir. No han informado bien porque eso plenamente es un regalo. Los más necesitados, fabricando. Nos atrasamos con los papeles, sino ya estuviéramos.

You know, now with this government, they are offering houses. We are working on that. We submitted the applications. There are 260 persons applying in this sector. We are signed to receive. We are not well informed but it is a gift... the most needed people, building. We delayed with our papers... we probably would have them already.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

No. No quedó en nada después.

No, I do not. Nothing was done later.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Claro que sí. Yo he participado desde la fundación (del barrio) porque el que no participa, a donde va? Uno tiene que estar metido en eso... para estar informado. Cuando vienen los politiqueros empiezan a prometer. Que si te voy a regalar esto para que me ayudéis con el voto, que si van a regalar cemento. Vos sabéis que... nosotros sabemos quienes nos han ayudado, déjennos tranquilos, sobre todo uno como indígena, eso es lo nacional. Esas leyes vienen para el pobre.

Definetly yes. I have participated since the foundation of the barrio, because where does the one who doesn't participate go? One have to be involved... to be informed. Whe the politicians come, they start promising... if they give you this so you help them with your vote, like when they offer cement. You know... we know you have helped us, live us along, especially us, the indigenous. That is national. Those laws come for the poor.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Sí, yo pertenezco. Somos ahora 23 en la junta comunal indígena.

Yes, I belong to the group. We are 23 in the indigenous communal council.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

La coordinación de los indígenas, nos reunimos a cada rato para esos proyectos las comunidades deben estar en conocimiento en la asamblea, del trabajo que se va a hacer.

The coordination of indigenous affairs, we meet very often to discuss those projects that the communities should know (in the assembly), the works that will be carried out.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

Desde que se fundó el barrio, 20 años, andamos en los veinte años. Yo iba a las reuniones. En la asociación de vecinos no estaba porque había mucho egoísmo. Desde más reciente cuando vamos fundando el grupo.

Since the barrio was funded, 20 years ago, around that. I used to attend the meetings. I was not in the neighborhood association because there was a lot of egoism. Now more recently after we grouped.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

No aplica.

It does not apply.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

No aplica.

It does not apply.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

La junta o asociación.

The council or organization.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Aceptamos pero con una condición. Como no, lo aceptamos como los talleres, parecido estilo de cooperativa. Arreglen su cuestión para que nos dicten las charlas del crédito. Yo iba a pagar pero siempre hay problemas familiares (problemas en la alta guajira). Pienso llegar hasta allá (señala su vivienda) y pienso en este bahareque pronto.

We accept but with one condition. Yes, we accept it as we accepted the workshops, similar style than the cooperatives. Fix your (internal) problems so that we receive more presentations. I was going to pay but there are household problems (in the Guajira region). I want to build over there (the person point at the house) and I plan to build the fence soon.

INTERVIEW 26
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Significó conocer muchas personas y conocer mejor a los compañeros. *It meant to me knowing many people and getting to know my partners better.*
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
No recuerdo. *I do not remember.*
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Si. Se pudo comprar unas láminas para el techo y terminar el baño que esta afuera. *Yes, I do. I was able to buy some roofing metal panels and finish the bathroom that is outside the house.*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Todos opinan que se debe seguir participando para que vayamos mejorando la vivienda. *Everybody says that we should keep participating in order to improve the dwelling.*
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
Si. A los talleres asistía la hija también. *Yes, it has. My daughter attended the workshops.*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
Aprendieron y explicaron todo para orientarse de lo que se debía hacer. *People learned and they explained and guided us on what we needed to do.*
- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**
Nos mandaron a hacer unos recortes y escuchar la charla. *We were asked to bring some Works and to listen to a speech.*
- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**
Nada. *Nothing.*

- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**

No. Es igual.

No, it remains the same.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?**

A las demás personas de la charla las veía pero a las de mi grupo las trataba más.

I used to see the other people that attended the presentation but the ones that were with me in the group, I met with them more often.

- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**

Ya yo venía teniendo un trato con las personas del grupo.

I had had a relationship with them before.

- 2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?**

La inseguridad y las cloacas no funcionan, cuando llueve se inunda toda la calle.

The insecurity and the sewer, which does not work. When it rains, the street overflows.

- 2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?**

Llamar la atención para que vengan a solucionar el problema, reunirnos, ir a la alcaldía.

I would call the attention so they come to solve the problem, we should meet and go to the municipality.

- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**

No se realizó.

No improvement was accomplished.

- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**

Es importante hacer una reunión con los vecinos para saber cuáles son las fallas, y qué está a nuestro alcance hacer para solucionar el problema.

It is important to meet with other neighbors to assess the problems that affect us, and the solution that we can provide to solve them.

- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**

No.

No, we do not.

- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

En la familia no hay nadie porque
no les gusta eso de la participación.

*In my family, no one is involved
because nobody likes that thing
about participation.*

**2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or
neighbor associations?**

Puede ser. Depende de lo que sea.
Según el interés.

*I may be willing to, but it depends on
what it is, according to the interest.*

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Solo la asociación de vecinos.

Only the neighborhood association.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Si. Queremos terminar de arreglar
la casa, construir, cuartos, la sala y
el porche.

*Yes, I would. We would like to finish
repairing the house, build bedrooms,
the living room, and the front porch.*

INTERVIEW 27
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Es muy bueno para nosotros, lo que pasa es que como es una cooperativa de 4 personas o de 6, a veces uno no queda bien. Si fuera individual quedaría uno mejor. Es una buena ayuda. *It is very good for us, but what happens is that since this is a cooperative of 4 or 6 people, sometimes one fails. If this were individual, it would be better. It is a good help.*
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
HABITAT-LUZ *The HABITAT-LUZ foundation.*
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Si. Hice el baño de atrás y compre unas puertas. *Yes. I did a bathroom in the back and bought some doors.*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Les gustó. *They liked it.*
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
Si. *Yes, I do.*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
Nos explicaron muchas cosas, nos oriento sobre como vamos a mejorar la casa. *They explained us many things, they guided us in the way we were going to improve our dwelling.*
- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**
La parte de mejorar la casa. *The housing improvement component.*
- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**
Me gustaría que hagan más talleres, sobre la construcción. *I would like more workshops, about housing construction.*

- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**

Sí, todo bien.

Yes, I do. Everything was fine.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?**

Si me gustó, pero lo malo es que una señora no siguió pagando.

Yes, I liked it, but the bad side is that one woman stopped paying.

- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**

Yo he hablado con ella.

I have talked to her.

- 2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?**

Las cloacas que no funcionan y se están dañando. Aquí hay de todos los servicios pero eso es lo que falta.

The sewer that doesn't work and is deteriorating. Here we have all the services but that (the sewer) is what we need.

- 2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?**

Pedir ayuda (no especifica a quien).

I would ask for help (does not specify what institution must be contacted).

- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**

Si (aunque no sabe especificar porque).

Yes, I do (The person does not specify what to do in that sense).

- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**

Si. Porque en la unión está la fuerza.

Yes, I do, because the strength is in the alliance.

- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**

No.

No, we do not.

- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**

Porque cada quien está en su trabajo.

Because each of us is at work.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Sí, pero es que ahora no se está haciendo mucho aunque si funciona el comedor el ambulatorio.

Yes, I am, but right now not much is done, eventhough the community dining room and the health center are open.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Las misiones.

The Missions (Local Government-funded programs).

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Si. Quiero continuar con la construcción, poner los portones de la cerca.

Yes, I do. I want to continue my house construction, get the front doors.

INTERVIEW 28
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Lo que más me impacto fueron los cursos de capacitación porque era lo que necesitábamos saber primero para ver como íbamos a administrar el dinero, eso fue lo que nos enseñaron en uno de los cursos.

What contributed me the most was the training workshops because we learned what we needed to know in order to administer our money. That was what we learned in those workshops.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

HABITAT-LUZ, la Alcaldía, la Universidad del Zulia, la Fundación Nuevo Amanecer y el SAMI.

The HABITAT-LUZ foundation, the municipality, The Univeristy of Zulia, the Nuevo Amanecer Foundation and the SAMI.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Un poco nada más, porque no fue suficiente lo que me dieron, claro... eso fue con respecto al ingreso que yo tenía en ese entonces. Frise 2 cuartos, se hizo la pendiente del techo para que escurra el agua y compre unas puertas, yo cubrí la diferencia pero nos pudimos mudar a la casa nueva.

Just a little bit, because what they gave me was not sufficient, well... that was according to my income at that time. I finished two bedrooms, I had the roofing levelled to drain the rain water, and bought two doors. I paid the difference and we could finally move in.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Que el crédito debería ser más continuo, hace un año que terminé de pagar y me interesa el otro crédito para microempresa, porque así le saco más para terminar la vivienda.

instalments a year ago, and I am interested in a new credit (microenterprise), because, in tha way, I make more money to invest in the house.

I think that the credit should be more constant. I finished paying my

- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**

(Le ha gustado).

(The person has liked it).

- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**

Si siento que hubo un cambio, porque antes todos compartíamos un solo cuarto, ahora tienen las niñas su cuarto y nosotros el nuestro.

Yes, I feel there was a change, because before we used to share a single room and now the girls have their own room and we ours.

- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**

Me parecieron excelentes, sobre todo los de construcción que nos dieron en HABITAT-LUZ porque eso me interesaba mucho antes y ahora si como puedo supervisar con conocimiento lo que le están haciendo a la casa. También los talleres de cómo ahorrar y administrar el dinero me gustaron.

They seemed excellent to me, especially the construction workshops, given by HABITAT-LUZ, because I was very interested in that before and now I can supervise the works at home with more knowledge. But I also liked the workshops about saving and administering the income.

- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**

Nada.

Nothing.

- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**

Si ha cambiado (aunque no especifica).

Yes, It has changed (the person does not specify).

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?**

Mi experiencia no fue tan agradable, porque es por eso que no he optado por otro préstamo, porque quedaron mal dos personas de los cinco que somos.

My experience was not so pleasant, and that is why I have not applied for another credit, because two of the five persons in my group did wrong.

- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**
 Yo les he dicho y una quiere terminar su crédito con el bono vacacional. *I have told them and I want to finish paying the instalments with my vacation bonus.*
- 2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?**
 La inseguridad y las cloacas que se desbordan y se perjudican los vecinos. *The insecurity and the sewer, which overflows and affects the neighbors.*
- 2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?**
 Conversar con el presidente de la junta directiva para que haya más patrullaje de la policía. *I would have a conversation with the president of the community board to get more police enforcement.*
- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**
 Si me ha motivado. Incluso vinieron para hacer un estudio de las viviendas que tienen necesidad para el Ministerio de Vivienda y Habitat y yo me le ofrecí a la coordinadora para ayudar a censar, que en mis ratos libres lo puedo hacer. *Yes, I am motivated. They even came to do a housing need assessment for the Ministry of Housing and Habitat and I offered my help, to the coordinator, to do the survey in my spare time.*
- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**
 Si, para mejorar las cosas que requieren las comunidades, porque si las cosas no se hacen en equipo no se logra nada. *Yes it is, in order to improve the things the communities require, because if things are not done as a group, nothing is accomplished.*
- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**
 No. *No, we do not.*
- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
 No participa. *(The person does not participate).*
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 No participa. *(The person does not participate).*

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

Porque a mí no me llama la atención, porque hay que dedicarse a eso.	<i>That is not of my interest. You have to spend time on it.</i>
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2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Si, estoy dispuesto a participar, pero a una junta directiva no.	<i>Yes, I am willing to participa, but not as a member of the board of directors.</i>
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2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Aquí están la asociación de vecinos, el Frente Francisco de Miranda y los Comités de Salud.	<i>Here, there are the neighborhood association, the Francisco de Miranda Front, and the Health Committees.</i>
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2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Si. Tener algo nuevo, por ejemplo como lo de microempresa, quiero formar una empresa en la comunidad de fotocopiado y venta de material escolar. Lo he pensado por muchos años.	<i>Yes, I would. I would like something new, for example, like the microenterprise credit. I was to open a business, a fotocopy center. I have thought about that over for many years.</i>
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SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TO BENEFICIARIES OF HOUSING IMPROVEMENT
LOANS.

INTERVIEW 29
BARRIO 23 DE MARZO

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Nos prestaron el dinero para meterle a la casa pero no se pudo seguir porque mi esposo a veces consigue algo de trabajo y a veces no, entonces la casa se quedó así y terminé de pagar el crédito. Dije que no me iba a meter más porque si quedo mal o se me pasa la letra me preocupa mucho. Yo quería terminar el pago rápido.
They lent us the money to invest in the house but I couldn't continue because my husband sometimes gets a job, but sometimes he doesn't. Therefore, the house hasn't changed and I finished paying. I said I was not going to apply again because I worry a lot if I fail and can't pay the installment. I wanted to finish paying soon.
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
No recuerdo.
I do not remember.
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Si. Le hice unas paredes nuevas y el techo (la sala).
Yes, it improved. I built new walls and the roofing (in the living room).
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
A ellos les gustó, lo malo es lo del pago.
They liked it. The bad side is the payment.
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
Es igual.
It has remained the same.
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
Todo bien.
Everything was fine.
- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**
Yo tenía guardado todo lo que hacíamos pero con la lluvia se dañó todo.
I kept all we did but the rain damaged it.

Hicimos un cuadro, como un dibujo de la familia y la casa.

I kept all we did but the rain damaged it. We drew a painting, like a sketch of the family and the house.

- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**

Nada, todo bien.

Nothing, everything was fine.

- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**

No, estamos igual.

No, we do not. We have not changed.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- 2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?**

Somos cinco los del grupo y están retirados de donde vivo, y cuando íbamos a las actividades trabajábamos juntos. Ya no volví a saber nada de ellos.

We are five in the group and they live apart from where I live, and when we attended the activities, we worked together. Now, I do not know anything from them.

- 2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?**

Ya no volví a saber nada de ellos.

I never met them again.

- 2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?**

El aseo y el agua que se va un día si y un día no.

The garbage collection and the water supply, which comes every other day.

- 2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?**

No sé que puedo hacer.

I do not know what to do.

- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**

No. Yo estoy muy ocupada con los niños y la tienda.

No, I do not. I am very busy with my children and the store.

- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**

Si. (no sabe especificar porque).

Yes, I do (the person does not know to explain why).

- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**

No.

No, we do not.

- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
 No participa. *(The person does not participate).*
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 No participa. *(The person does not participate).*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
 Porque las hijas están muy pequeñas y el hijo juega futbol pero no aquí en la comunidad. *My daughters are very little and my son plays soccer but not in this community.*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
 No, no me gusta, solo trabajar en la casa. *No, I do not like it. I only take care of household duties.*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
 Solo el consejo comunal. *Only the communal council.*
- 2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?**
 Me gustaría pero allí uno tiene que ir a las reuniones y siento que pierdo el tiempo, y si mando al hijo le dicen que debo ir yo. Yo quiero seguir pero tengo que trabajar para pagar el colegio y no puedo ir a los talleres, que son importantes también. *I would like to but in that program we have to attend meetings and I feel that I waste my time, and if I send my son. They tell him that I should go instead. I want to continue but I have to work to pay for my children's education, so I cannot attend the workshops, which are also important.*

INTERVIEW 30
BARRIO ROMULO GALLEGOS

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Para mí ha sido lo mejor en la forma que una vez alguien, no se... así como un loco- nos dio cobres sin apretarnos las orejas. Hasta los barrios nos quitan. De 75 a 25 en un taller pensaban que nos iban a quitar la cartera. Ustedes saben bien... Yo con Carmen (otro miembro del grupo) no nos llevábamos bien, pero mi amiga, que es cristiana, nos ayudó. Cuando estoy en un SAM (forma de ahorro colectivo donde una persona se beneficia al coleccionar y guardar los ahorros de un grupo) yo me siento que me quitan. Yo no siento que me van a quitar la casa. El problema con esto es pagarlo. La gente creyó que era meterse y agarrar la plata. Yo veo a la gente y se los digo. La gente no quiere ser fiador de nadie. Puedo ser sola porque ya he pagado, aunque no estoy segura. Tengo que ir (al Sami). Nos caímos pero seguimos y pagamos. Iría a un tercero (crédito). Los dos seguimos en el grupo, somos tres (eran tres en el grupo una se retiró al terminar de pagar). Lo que pasa es que la gente se quiere meter pero chillan por las horas. Son una cuerda de vagos.

For me it has been the best because once someone, I do not know...a lunatic gave us money without pressure. Even the barrios take from us. From 75 to 25 in a workshop they thought that they were going to take all our money. You understand... I with Carmen (another member of the group) did not get along, but my friend, who is a Christian, helped us. When I am in a SAM (form of collective savings in which one person collect other people's savings), I feel that they take my money. I do not feel that they are going to take my house. The problem with this is to pay. People believed that it was just to get some money. I see them and I tell them. People do not want to be codebtor. I can go alone because I have already paid, although I am not sure. I have to go (to the Sami). We felt but we continued and paid. I would go for a third (loan). Two of us continue in the group, we were three (the third person withdrew after paying off). What happens is that people want to apply but they protest for the schedules. They are all lazy.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

A la alcaldía, la universidad y el BOD (Banco).

The municipality, the university and the BOD (Local Bank).

Hasta un día vinieron de SAGAS (Gas del Municipio) a ver las tierras. Vinieron los bomberos. Aquí dijeron que tenía que tumbar y eso (lo dijeron) después de agarrar el crédito. ¿Qué paso? Bueno algún día, porque yo necesito una placa (techo).

One day, they came from SAGAS (Municipal Gas provider) to see the land. The firefighters came. They said here that we had to demolish, and that was after receiving the credit. What happened? Well... one day, because I need a new roofing.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Si, y las orientaciones con lo del viento. Primero fue la cerca y luego el local (comercial, abasto). Me di cuenta que la hice al revés (la casa). Tengo esta ventana cerrada (con bloques de vidrio) pero tenía que ser abierta para el fresco. Ahora tengo un consultorio del barrio con un medico de la misión. Tengo el baño afuera aunque yo se que debe ir adentro por lo que me dijeron. Yo sueño con mi baño adentro. Tengo atrás una estructura para medio techo para el comedor y la cocina. Tengo eso entre ceja y ceja. Te repito: a mi no me gusta el SAM. Tengo problemas. Esto se come (base de la pared) por eso del nivel freático. Ojala fuera barón para construir con Aliven yo misma.

Yes, I do; and the orientation in regard with the ventilation. First, it was the fence and then the store. I realized that I positioned the house upside down. I have this window locked (with glass blocks) but it had to be open. Now I have the neighborhood doctor's office (from the mission) in my house. The bathroom is outside although I know that it should be inside, that's what they told me. I dream with an inside bathroom. In the back, I have a structure that partially serves as a roof for the dining room and the kitchen. I have that in mind. I tell you again that I do not like the SAM. I have problems. This wall is ruined because of the water level. I wish I were a man to build it myself.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Ellos (la familia) van a donde yo voy. En San Jacinto (otro sector de la ciudad) vive mi mamá. Yo les decía que fueran y van gente que no tiene cultura. Yo les dije que se metieran. Mi esposo aceptó, por decirte, un artefacto y el me dio luz verde. Primero las dos cercas. La gente viene y me dice: ¿mirá y vos como hiciste para eso? Con el ahorro.

They (the relatives) go wherever I go. My mother lives in San Jacinto (a sector of the city). I told them there to go but people without culture go. I told them to apply. My husband accepted, for instance, and he approved my involvement. First, it was the two fences. And people come and ask me: how did you do that? With my saving.

Yo no se ahorrar pero cuando me voy a la calle lo gasto. Ahora que nos están pagando.

I do not know how to save and when I go out I spend it all. And now, that they (the Missions) are paying us.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Si. Hemos mejorado. Por un lado la cerca con la seguridad y por otro agrandar la casa con más tranquilidad aunque la casa la tengo que subir. Menos mal que no es de platabanda (techo de losa de concreto). Fíjate, yo vivía acá y allá (apunta la vivienda enfrente) vivía una vecina no nos tratábamos. Ahora uno ha dado más amistad, se saluda. Todo lo bueno. A mí me tienen como peleona y ahora no peleo con las personas. Me lo trago. Nunca uno tiene la razón, entonces yo los dejo comer. Yo entonces le digo que trabajen más que yo.

security, and in the other hand we could enlarge the house properly, eventhough it has to be raised. At least it is not a concrete roof. See... I used to live here and my neighbour there (in the house in front), but we didn't get well. Now we have given more friendship and we greet each other. All the good. People think that I am quarrelsome but now I do not argue with other persons. I deal with it. One is never right, and then I leave them along. I tell them to work harder than I.

Yes, I do. We have improved. In one hand there is the fence and the

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Hay gente que está echada en su casa y no buscan. Que son buenos. Pueden hacer más. Yo no soy capaz de pararme y hablar. Me gustaría uno (un taller) de miedo escénico. Cuando arranco, no me paro.

There are people who stay at home and do nothing. They are good people. They can do more. I am able to stand up and speak out. I would like a workshop that addresses the scenic fear. When I star, I do not stop.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

¿Qué recuerdo? La convivencia, el compartir. Ahora pienso que no hacemos este compartir. Yo iba bien (a los talleres). El trato, la amistad nueva. Unos buenos, otros malos. Los temas para mí fueron buenísimos.

What do I remember? The sharing. Now I think that we do not do this sharing. I used to go to the workshops. The relationship, the new friendship. Some good, others bad. For me the themes were excellent.

Cuando tuve el de hábitat, yo casi mato al albañil porque me di cuenta que trabajó rustico y es más, al muchacho que estaba aquí le dije que se colara.

Aprendió por ver y hubiera querido que el fuera también. Hay que hacerle cambiar a la gente eso de “a gratis”. Yo soy de las que no esperan que lleguen a darme. Yo hice la fiesta de las madres por autogestión nosotros. El día del niño hago mi bochincho (fiestecita) aquí. La gente tiene que acostumbrarse a eso (a hacer este tipo de cosas).

When I attended the workshop about the habitat, I almost killed the builder when I realized that the work was not good enough. I even invited that boy to attend the following workshop.

He learned from experience. One must make that people change the interpretation of "what it is free". I do not expect others to provide for me. I planned the party for the mothers myself, by self-management. For the children's day I had a little party right here. People have got familiar with that (to this kind of things).

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Ya hablé. Agregaría más talleres. Los de los padres y talleres para uno, las madres y con los hijos, ya que es culpa de la madre el trato familiar. Que no los hagan lejos. Busqué la casa evangélica y luego busque la casa de Carmen. Hasta preste la propia casa para la comunidad.

I said it already. I would add more workshops; one about parenting and other workshops for us, the mothers and the children, because household relations are the mother's responsibility. However, I hope they are not so late. I achieved the evangelical house and later a house for Carmen. I use my own house for community activities.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Claro que sí. Si mi hermana decía que ahora no peleo. Ahora tomo las cosas con calma. Pienso. Antes era un fosforito. Aprendí a economizar. No gastármelo en otra cosa. Ahora es lo que yo quiero, no que lo gasto en otra cosa.

Definitively yes. My sister says that now I do not argue. Now I take things calmly. I think. I was more irritable. I learned to economize, not to spend it all in other things. Now it is what I want, and I do not spend it wrongly.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

En mi grupo, fue bien. Vos sabéis, yo digo que belén (asesor del barrio) nos cayó del cielo. Cuando caí un mes (atraso en la cuota de pago) C (miembro de su grupo) vino y me formó una delante de todo el mundo aquí.

Yo, tranquila no pelee. Yo le dije que pago el lunes. Pero C después tuvo un problema, se cayó por cinco meses. La gente me decía que fuera e hiciera lo mismo con ella. Yo no le dije nada. Me enseñaron (los facilitadores) eso de que las cosas llegan al tiempo (el taller del tiempo) en la casa de las dos plantas de la esquina. Han sido buenas personas (agentes del programa), no son groseras. A mi me han dado consejos, no dejarme caer, pagar al día. Son buenos ayudantes del SAMI.

In my group, we did well. You know, I say that Belen (economic advisor of the barrio) felt from the sky. When I could pay a monthly installment, C (member of the group) came and complained to me in front of everybody.

I was calm and didn't reply. I told her that I was going to pay the following Monday. However, later C had a problem, failed for five months. People told me to go and do the same thing to her. I told her nothing. They (the facilitators) taught me that things arrive but it takes time (during a workshop that addressed that topic) in a nearby house. They have been good people (the program agents). They are not rude. They have offered me advice, not to fail, to pay on time. They are good assistants (SAMI).

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Eran CR. y CC. Ya te conté como me trató pero luego mejoramos. Carmen se fue del barrio para los Estados Unidos pero le dijo a su hijo que pagara. Ella enviaba un cheque o algo así para pagar.

They were CR and CC (names). I already told you how one of them treated me, but later we did better. Carmen left the barrio for the United States but her son paid for her. She used to send a check or something like that to pay.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

La inseguridad, el terreno este y el nivel freático. Todas las casas se echan a perder. Esa losa fundación no de comería las casas. Y que a nosotros no nos terminaron la segunda capa de asfalto.

The insecurity, the soil and the freatic water. All the houses are ruined. With those croncrete bases, the houses would not deteriorate. And the street pavement was not concluded.

En la calle 20 que tienen que embaular, que pasa la cañada de quien nadie sabe cómo se comieron el dinero, los cobres, porque no sabemos nada. La 12 del barrio está una calle tapada de basura que la misma gente tira allí. Por allí pasamos al hospital. Ese trabajo se lo llevaron a otro barrio. Ahora la urbanización nos quiere cerrar que nos ahogemos, Aquí que todo pase por aquí y ellos no aportan.

Si hacen una villa tienen todo y nosotros nada. Necesitamos la guardería. La alcaldía nos ha ayudado. Lo que tenemos es por el trabajo de ellos. Y el Sami, porque se metió aquí la gente tiene su cerquita, cu cuartito, su casita....

There is the 20th street in which an open water drainage runs, but we don't know who took the money for that work. The 12th street is blocked with garbage that these same people have disposed there. We go through it to the hospital. That work was taken to another barrio. And now the nearby housing complex wants to let us drown. They do not contribute.

If they build a village (private gated community), they have everything. However, we have nothing. We need a daycare. The municipality has helped us. We owe them what we have. And the Sami, since they are here, people have their fences, their rooms, their houses...

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Nosotros hicimos una autogestión del agua. Agarramos 16000 bolívares por casa para hacer la red. Cuando hicieron las casas (una Villa vecina) nos la quitaron porque ahora entra primero allá y todas tienen tanque. Ir a tirar piedras allá en Sagas (se ríe). No, pero nosotros queremos saber a quién le toca embaular la cañada y que nos pongan una de esas casetas (de seguridad). Los niños que crecieron aquí a los 17 años se gradúan de delincuentes.

We self-managed the water provision system. We got 16000 bolivars per house to build it. When the housing complex was built, they took it from us because now they get water first, and they all have water tanks. I would go to Sagas and throw stones (laughing). No, but we really want to know who is in charge of the construction of the water channel and a police enforcement facility. The kids who grew up here, and are 17 years old now, graduate as delinquents.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Más todavía. Yo siempre he trabajado por la comunidad y quiero que se vea mi barrio consolidado. Trabajar más.

It has contributed even more. I have always worked for the community and want that it looks consolidated. Work harder.

Hay más que quieren meterse pero hay gente que dice ahora vamos a meternos para quedarme con los cobres. Se van gobiernos y vienen. Este barrio es de nosotros y tiene que dolernos. Yo misma le digo eso a la juventud.

There is more people who want to get involved but there is also people who want to do it to get the money. Governments go and come. This barrio is ours and we have to care for it. I, myself, tell that to the youngsters.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Claro que sí, hijo. Yo quisiera que ellos participaran. Yo trato de meter a la gente algo de lo que yo aprendí. Si hubiera eso quiero que la alcaldía, ustedes, hagan más talleres pero hay desinformación con relación a la familia, cualquier cosa. Sino aprende a hacer uno mismo las cosas. Que ellos participen. Estén al tanto de todo. La gente afuera y no sabe. Tiene que aprender a hacer talleres para todos.

Definitively yes. I would like that they participate. I try to tell people what I have learned. If we have it, I want that the municipality, I mean you, offer more workshops because there is misinformation in regard to the familia, whatever they give us. Otherwise we learn ourselves. I wish they participate and be informed. They do not know. They have to offer workshops for everybody.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Sí. Yo ahora soy miembro del consejo comunal. Estuve en la asociación de vecinos. En todo he estado metida. La gente no quiere creer.

Yes, I do. Now I am member of the comunal council. I belong to the neighbourhood association. I have been part of everything. People do not want to believe me.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Imagínate, en todas partes me ven, a pie, en bicicleta... Ojala hubiera diez yo. Sin interés yo empecé, sin nada.

Think about it. People see me everywhere, walking around, biking...I wish there were ten more of me. I started without interest, with nothing.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

¿Desde cuándo? Ya te digo.... Hace como 15 años aquí en el barrio. Yo invadí en la tercera tumbada. Yo era la más alta (el terreno) ahora estoy más bajita. Las casas se van para abajo.

Since when? I tell you... since 15 years ago here in the barrio. I invaded with the third group. I was higher (the lot) now I am lower than the others. The houses fall apart.

Nosotros rellenamos. Antes vivía en La Limpia (sector de la ciudad) y era de la asociación de vecinos. Luego en Las Playitas en el 18 (otro sector de la ciudad) y era de deporte. Ponme 40 años de mi trabajo cuando empecé jugando fútbol. En la limpia logré 15 equipos, en las playitas 18 y aquí 10. Yo les compro un balón aunque aquí no hay cancha. No hay espacio. Aquí hay un terreno y quiero que nos lo compren. Todas las villas tienen centro comercial y ¿aquí? ¿Porque no? Tenemos el terreno y queremos allí todo eso.

We had to fill up the land. Before I used to live in La Limpia (sector of the city) and was member of the neighborhood association. Later I lived in Las Playitas (another sector of the city) where I promoted sport activities. It was after 40 years of work when I began playing soccer. In La Limpia I organized 15 teams, in Las Playitas, 18 and here, 10. I buy the kids a ball although here there is not court. There is not space. Here there is a lot and I want that buy it.

All the gatted communities have shopping center, and here? Why not? We have the land and we want all that there.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

No aplica.

It does not apply.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

No aplica.

It does not apply.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

¿Otra? Lo que hay aquí es la iglesia (cristiana evangélica). Ellos hacen escuela dominical. Hay dos iglesias porque se dividieron.

Another one? What we have here is the church (evangelical). They organize the Sunday school. There are two new churches after it was divided.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Unnnnh. Como arroz picado (mucho). Es lo único que me dio los cobres (el dinero) fácil (fácilmente). ¿Solo por eso? A mí me gustan los talleres. No me los perdía y si me pierdo uno voy a dar hasta 23 de marzo. Me invitaron a una fiesta (taller diagnóstico comunitario) en la universidad y tengo mi placa. Fui con Carmen, mi enemiga, y hasta nos abrazamos.

Unnnh, like rice grains (a lot). It (the program) was the only one that gave me some money easily. Only because of that? I like the workshops. I did not miss one and if I do, I go to another barrio. I was invited to a party (community assessment workshop) at the university and I keep the plaque. I went with Carmen, my enemy, and later we even hugged each other.

La ayuda se desea a flor de piel porque aquí se han perdido los valores. Ahora tengo metas. El Sami y la gente que trajo, lo máximo. Ustedes son sami, y que LUZ siga siendo la primera.

The help is openly wished because here values have been lost. Now I have goals. The Sami and the people that it brought here are the best. You are Sami, and I hope the University keeps being the first.

INTERVIEW 31
BARRIO ROMULO GALLEGOS

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Bueno... te cuento que con el accidente de mi hijo estuve 4 meses en el hospital y me atrasé, le dije al sami no me acoses pero yo pago. Acosa a los morosos. Yo no me considero morosa. Me decían que debía construir en menos de dos meses luego de recibir el crédito y eso fue llover y llover. El que me visitaba a mi le dije que yo estaba al día. No podía tumbar el rancho, tenía que esperar que dejara de llover para empezar y desocuparlo. El problema está en que no se usa la plata. Yo les dije que era responsable por no quedar. Bueno, está bien, me dijeron. Y empecé a construir como dije y ellos vinieron porque yo los llamé cuando iba a vaciar la losa y vinieron luego a ver.

Well... let me tell you that, with the accident of my son, I was four months at the hospital and I postponed my payments. I told the Sami not to coerce me. I will pay. Make the ones who owe, pay. I do not consider myself a delinquent. They told me that I should build in less than two months after receiving the loan, but it rained a lot afterward. I told the person who had my record that I had no debt. I could not demolish the shack and start the construction until it stoped raining. The problem appears when the money is not invested. I told him that was responsible, and he said: Well, it is ok. I began to build as I said. They came when I called them at the time I was going to build the concrete roof, and they came to verify.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

Bueno... por eso. Están ustedes de Habita luz y el Sami. Yo se que eso se llama desarrollo autónomo de Ciudadanía Plena.

Well... because of that... There are the HABITAT-LUZ and the SAMI. I know that is called autonomous development of Full Citizenship.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Si. Estaba al principio con angustia porque cualquier vientecito ponía el techo a volar... y las goteras.... Ahora estoy mucho más tranquila. Cualquier lloviznita parecía cascada. Yo estoy muy bien.

Yes, I do. I was very nervous at the beginning because any wind would blow the roof off... and the leaks... Now I am a lot calmer. Any pooring rain seemed a waterfall. I am very well.

- Ahora hay atraso para que me den el nuevo crédito. *Now I see that there is delay in my new credit.*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
 Los hijos míos están tranquilos. Por mi estoy feliz y tranquila. Como le dije, llovía y teníamos que pararnos todos en la noche. Era una lucha. Siempre hemos trabajado en unión de mis hijos porque soy divorciada. He ido yo sola tratando de no quedar mal. El que me visita (asesor económico) me dice: te felicito porque es grande tu casa. Gracias a Dios porque mejoramos. *My sons are more relaxed. I am happy and relaxed. As I already told you, it used to rain and we had to be aware all night. It was like a shower. We have always worked together with my sons because I am divorced. I have done all this trying to be on time. The person who visits me (the economic advisor) tells me: congratulations because your house is big. I thank God because we have improved.*
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
 Los primeros talleres, más bien al contrario, los puse en práctica y los pongo en práctica aún. Para aquel entonces, tenía muchos problemas. Tenía mucho stress por el divorcio. Cuando salía del taller yo me sentía otra, livianita, dejaba todo allá. Mi hija me ayudo con uno y los otros los hice yo toditos y me sirvieron inmensamente. Los otros de hábitat, uno... buenos todos que fueron buenos. *The first workshops, on the contrary, I put them into practice and I still do it. At that time, I had many problems. I had a lot of stress after the divorce. After a workshop I left I felt like another person, more relaxed, I would leave everything behind. My daughter helped by attending one session and I attended the rest myself. They were very helpful to me. The other habitat workshops, one... well, all were good.*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
 Bien. *Fine (no more comments).*
- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**
 Que yo recuerde fue algo muy bonito que uno comparte. Conoce uno a otra gente de compartir con esas personas. O sea que uno tiene que hablar con ella y había una opinión que me dio una idea. *That I can remember... it was something nice that we could share. One meets some other people and share with them. I meant that I had to talk to them and one opinion gave me an idea.*

En los talleres, conoces más amistades... compañerismo. Me sirvió muchísimo.

In the workshops, you get to meet more friends... more friendship. They helped me a lot.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Hasta donde yo estuve asistiendo todo estuvo bien. Prácticamente los que yo viví, que me ayudaron inmensamente.

Until the moment I attended the workshops, everything was fine, practically, all that I experienced helped me enormously.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Con mi familia, yo era una persona que estaba tan estresada. Yo era quien me decía cálmate, tranquila que usted con pelear no gana nada. Pongo la mente en blanco cerrando los ojos como me enseñaron en el taller, viajando y meditando. Relajándome. Mis hijos me decían que me estaba volviendo loca. Yo les decía no hijos, tranquilos que voy bien.

With my family, I was a stressed person. I said to myself calm down, relax, that fighting does not take me anywhere. I close my eyes and relax as they taught me in the workshop, travelling and meditating, relaxing. My children told me that I was going crazy. I told my sons to be calm. I was doing well.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Yo siempre he ido con mi mismo grupo. Pero me dicen que ahora puedo ir sola porque no me he pasado con mi tiempo. Nadé mucho y me ahogué en la orilla. Uno se atrasó también pero cancelamos. Quise luego meterme en microempresa pero no quiero ser maluca con mi grupo.

I have always gone with the same group. Nevertheless, they tell me that I can go alone now because me I have not failed over time. I swam a lot and I drowned at the beach. One postponed the payments but we finished. Then I wanted to apply for a micro-business loan but I do not want to abandon my group.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Te aseguro que me costó mucho adaptarme al grupo con el que yo iba. Luego se fueron y me fui con otra gente. Esto fue al principio antes del crédito.

I assure you that it took me a lot to adapt to the group. Later, they left and I joined another people. That was at the beginning, before I received the loan.

Con una de ellas, no voy y si me aceptan un grupo de tres voy. Yo hice los talleres aquí. Eduardo los hizo en otra comunidad para no atrasarse. Yo le dije que hasta yo lo llevaba con tal de hacerlo con él. Si alguno se atrasa hay que pagar un porcentaje. En el caso mío no.

With one of them, I will not go again and if they accept a group of three, then I apply. I attended the workshops here. Eduardo attended in another community to reach the group. I told him that I would take him there so he could apply with me. If someone delays the payments, I must pay a percentage. However, that was not my case.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

¿Principales? La inseguridad aquí es horrible. Aquí no entra un camión. El que medio entra tiene una pistola. El aseo es a medias. El agua es una constante lucha. Aquí lo que medio sirve es el asfaltado. No tenemos Cantv (proveedor de telefonía fija). Por la calle de acá a cada rato se revientan las cloacas. Aquella calle es una bomba de tiempo. Tenemos bien luz y agua. Cuando llueve para abajo se inunda. Fulanita.... Se está ahogando! Eso es un desastre. Aquí todo en eso está bien (mi casa).

What were the main problems? The insecurity is horrible here. Any truck driver wants to drive through the barrio. The one that does it has a gun. The garbage collection partially works. The water is a constant fight. The water is a constant fight. Here the pavement is ok. We do not have phone service. The sewer overflows. That street is a bomb. The water and the electricity are fine. It floods when it rains. That is a disaster. Here, all that is ok (in my house).

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Supuestamente, aquí, el barrio tiene una junta comunal. Hablan, opinan, se reúnen. A mí me preguntan. Yo voy, ellos van y hablan y de pronto:... hoy... que fuimos a sagas (Gas de la ciudad), Ivima, en fin. Y no se ve nada. Yo voy a las reuniones del barrio pero hablan mucho. Yo se los digo. Se recogen firmas y se archivan.

Apparently, here, the barrio has a communal board. They speak, they give their opinion, they gather. They ask me. I go, they go and speak and suddenly: today... we went to Sagas (Gas provider), Ivima, whatever. However, we do not see anything. I go to the neighborhood meetings but they talk a lot. I tell them so. They collect signatures, which are filed.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Hay Dios. No sé cómo contestar. Porque ciudadanía plena ha ayudado a mejorar. Yo no porque no me da tiempo.

Oh God. I do not know how to respond, because full citizenship has helped us to improve. Not me, because I do not have time.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Si, como no, pero el problema es ese; que las personas que escogen al principio tienen mucho entusiasmo pero ellos se quedan en eso porque dicen que no tienen tiempo tampoco. Me dicen pero yo voy aunque voy a quedar mal. Hicieron una reunión y me pidieron para los pasajes, los refrescos. No tengo problema.

have a lot of enthusiasm at the beginning but they slow down later because they say that they do not have time either. They invite me and I go even though I know I am not going to do much. They called a meeting and asked me for money to pay for transportation and refreshments. I have no problem doing that.

Yes, I but there is a problem; the persons that are initially chosen

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

No, nunca.

No, we have never.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

La persona nunca ha participado.

The person has never participated.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

No participa.

(The person does not participate).

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

He colaborado cuando me lo piden.

I collaborate when they asked me to.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Por falta de tiempo y oír a la gente que forma parte de la organización.

Due to a lack of time and listening to the people who belong to the organization.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

No.

No, I do not.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Sí, estoy esperando. Ojala me
dijeran que es la próxima semana.

*Yes, I would. I am waiting (for
another loan). I wish they tell me
that it is next week.*

INTERVIEW 32
BARRIO ROMULO GALLEGOS

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Ha sido muy chévere porque uno se entera de cosas que uno ignora saber. Compartimos el taller, unos mi esposo y otros yo. Y otro mi hijo cuando yo no he podido por estar aquí en la casa y mi esposo porque trabaja.

It has been very nice because one learns things that one ignored or did not know. We shared the workshops. My husband attended some and I did either. My son did it also for me when I was not able to attend because I had to stay at home and my husband was at work.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

No me acuerdo. Me acuerdo de las caras pero no de las instituciones. De todos si pero los nombres muy poco. Cuando vienen, bien.

I do not remember. I remember the faces but not the institutions they represent. I know of them but not their names. When they come, it is good.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Sí claro que sí. Incluso si no fuese así no estaríamos optando por un nuevo crédito, para terminar la casa, el baño, como les dije. Belén (la asesora) nos estuvo diciendo que aun no nos tenía algo seguro. Ella se llevó unos papeles y ¿entonces? Bueno, se relleno al principio y ya no hemos tenido más problemas.

Yes, definitively yes. If it were not like that, we would not be applying for a new credit, to finish the house, the bathroom, as I told you. Belen (economic advisor) was telling us that it was not sure. She took some papers and then? Well, we raised the house at the beginning and we have not had more problems.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Opinamos que es una ayuda para uno. Uno sabe que lo tiene que pagar. Uno no tiene un presupuesto para esto. Imagínate. Cualquiera viene a la casa y dice que: ¡que caserón! ¿Cómo lo logran?

We think that is an aid for us. One knows that it has to be paid. One does not have a budget for this. You can imagine. Someone comes to the house and says: what a big house! How did you do it?

Nos privamos de muchas cosas. No es fácil. Mis hijos están contentos y queremos que el Sami nos dé más.

and we want that the Sami gives us more.

We deprive ourselves of many things.

It's not easy. My children are happy

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Si. Como le decía, uno aprende varias cosas allí, como conservar, a saber el esfuerzo para adquirir una cosa. Cuando uno viene a la casa, uno le enseña a los hijos el valor de las cosas.

Yes, as I was telling you, one learns several things there, how to preserve things, to value the effort people make in order to achieve a thing. When I go home I teach my children the value of things.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Uno escucha tantas cosas. Son buenas. Hasta uno comparte. Recuerdo que traíamos cosas y compartíamos. De estas cosas una persona aprende a compartir por primera vez, con juegos (actividades de los talleres). Allí se relajan. Algunos tienen problemas. La gente se sentía bien. Yo salía chévere.

One listens to so many things. They are good. We even share. I remember that we brought things and that we shared. A person learns to share from these things for the first time, by playing (activities at the workshops). People relax there. Some have problems. People felt well. I left very well.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Como lo que te acabo de contar...

As I told you...

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

No sé. Todo lo que vimos lo vi bien.

I do not know. All I saw was fine.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Bueno, siempre he sido comunicativa con mis hijos y con mi esposo la relación ha sido bien chévere. Con los vecinos, con toda la comunidad, me llevo bien. A mí me tratan con respeto.

Well, I have always been communicative with my children, and the relationship with my husband has been very nice. In regard with my neighbors, the community. I get along very well with them.

En lo que pueda ayudar aquí estamos, en lo económico y en lo social.

People respect me and I collaborate, economically or socially.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Al principio no nos fue bien por el señor Caballero porque el no se comprometió en el principio. El siempre trabajaba y no tuvo problemas. Creo que fue por irresponsabilidad. Entonces decidimos apartarnos y seguir solos.

At the beginning it didn't work well with Mister Caballero because he didn't commit. He always worked and had no problems. I believe he is irresponsible. Then we decide to set apart and to continue alone.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

El señor C quedó mal. Mi esposo me dijo que el Sami le pidió el 10 por ciento de su crédito. Mi esposo fue a hablar con él (señor C) y él se comprometió y nos dio ese 10%. Yo tengo muchos años trabajando y nunca he quedado mal. Con M, si canceló su crédito. Con ella muy chévere, incluso con C muy bien, aunque quedó mal. El también estuvo bien con nosotros.

of his credit. My husband went to speak with him (Mister C) and he gave his word and gave us that 10 percent. I have worked for many years and have never behave badly. With M, she paid hes credit. With her, it was very nice, even with C, it was very nice, although he didn't pay. He was also in good terms with us.

Mister C failed. My husband told me that the Sami asked him for the 10%

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

De tantos. La comunidad necesita de todo. Ahora está lo de casa por rancho. No sé hasta dónde llegarán. Aquí está la avenida 20 por la cañada, allí no cumplieron. Debido a eso algunas personas se desilusionaron y no creen en los créditos. Aquí hay mucha inseguridad de vez en cuando. Al que entra lo pueden atracar. Hay muchos problemas.

Ohh, I recognize so many. The community needs everything. Now we have the rancho substitution program. I do not know how long it will last. Here the 20th avenue... and the cañada... they did nothing about it. Due to that, some people were disappointed and do not believe in the credits. Here there is a lot of insecurity. Whoever comes to the

barrio can be assalted. There are many problems.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Yo solo le oro a Dios. Y le pido a Dios que las organizaciones que están en ese medio se puedan... Tantas promesas, ojala ellos cumplieran. Uno no puede hacer nada. Solo Dios puede pero el hombre no se deja.

I only pray to God, and I ask him that the organizations that are in the area do... So many promises, I wish they could comply. One alone cannot do anything. Only God is able to, but people do not let him.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Puede ser. Porque la cuestión es que muchas personas se desilusionan. Cuando ven los logros, unos se animan el uno al otro. Ellos se animan. Aquí hay un poco de oposición (no política sino entre las personas), si se animan, cuando haya un solo sentir, de un propósito, tengamos el mismo pensar. Lo lograremos, mientras uno y otro piensen de la misma manera.

It could be, but the thing is that many people are disappointed. When they see the achievements, some of us are encouraged. They are motivated. Here there is some opposition (not political but among residents), if they are motivated, if there is one single thought, a purpose, we have the same perception. We will achieve it when we all think in the same way.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Creo que sí.

I believe so.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Aparte de mi iglesia (cristiana), no, a ninguna. Mi esposo estuvo en el comité de salud como colaborador en transporte, pero ya no por falta de tiempo. Yo actúo a través de la iglesia. Estamos trabajando con jóvenes drogadictos en el barrio de enfrente haciendo pastoral.

Besides my church (Christian), no, we do not belong to any. My husband was in the health committee as the collaborator in transportation, but he is no longer helping due to his lack of time. I work with the church. We are working with young addicts in the nearby neighborhood doing pastoral duties.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

No es en esos grupos. Ahora como colaboradores. Incluso tenemos buenas relaciones con ellos.

It is not in those groups. Now, I participate as collaborator. We even have a good relationship with them.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

No aplica (aunque se deduce que ha sido recientemente).

It does not apply (It seems that the participation is recent).

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

Porque no tengo tiempo, porque mi esposo trabaja de 6 a 2, descansa y se va hasta las 7 y yo en mi iglesia después.

I do not have time, because my husband works from 6 am to 2pm. He rests and leaves for work again until 7 pm, and I go to church later.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Sería por cuestión de tiempo. Por una parte allí se ven cosas que se me afectan. Prefiero estar por afuera. Yo he estado en reuniones cuando tienen que bajar recursos pero discuten quien debe y quien no debe recibir el dinero. Discuten por eso. Aquí se ve. Aquí el proyecto era hacer una bloquera. No sé dónde está el dinero. Debe tenerla la persona que tiene el dinero. No sé si es falta de disposición. No les he preguntado más a ellos. Eso no se ha dado. No sé porque.

It would be a matter of time. In one hand, I perceive things that affect me. I prefer to be outside. I have been in meetings to allocate the resources but they discuss who should or should not receive the aid. That was what they discussed and people saw it. Here the project consisted on a local block factory. I do not know where the money is. The person who administered the resources must have it. I do not know if it is lack of compromise. I do not know why.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

La iglesia siempre ha estado. No estoy muy enterada. Debe haber cooperativas pero no sé.

The church has always been. I am not informed. There probably are cooperatives but I do not know.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

No es que no quiera. Claro que yo lo hago, sino es cuestión de organizarse (personalmente). De hacerlo sí se hacen las dos cosas (talleres y crédito) como se llama, (ríe), sí, me interesa. Queremos terminar la casa, con el sueldo de mi esposo de hacerlo así de un día para otro con el crédito.

It is not that I do not want to. I would do it, but it is all about organization. To do it yes, the two things (workshops and credit) as it is called, (laughs), yes, I'm interested. We want to finish the house, not with my husband's income but with the opportunity of the loan.

INTERVIEW 33

BARRIO ROMULO GALLEGOS

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Hice un solo préstamo pero el vecino quedó con deuda. Mi esposo no quiso. Si él estaba mejor que nosotros ¿porque teníamos que pagar nosotros? Esto significó bastante porque pude terminar ese proyecto. Fui a los talleres, aprendimos bastante. Espero el diploma porque nunca fui a buscarlo. Imagínese, un día fui y me dijeron que la cuenta aun salía en el sistema. Me dijeron que les daba mucha pena pero debía como 2 bolívares y eso salía allí. Un solo bolívar, pero igual me hicieron el voucher y ya. Se solucionó eso.

I received only one loan, but the neighbor ended up with a debt. My

husband did not want. If he was better than we were, why did we have to pay for him? This represented a lot because I could finish that project. I went to the workshops, we learned enough. I do not have my diploma because I never went to pick it up. Imagine, one day I went and they told me that my account still appeared in the system. They told me that they were sorry but it showed that I owed 2 bolívares. That insignificant amount, nevertheless I paid it. That was solved.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

(por la expresión en su rostro presumo que no se acuerda). Luego pensando y dice cuando vienen aquí a mí.... de la alcaldía. De verdad soy malísima para eso.

(Based on the expresión on her face, she does not remember). Later she says: when they come here.... from the municipality. Sorry but I am bad trying to remember.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Siiii, mejoró. Bueno, porque la pude ampliar. Yo no tenía cocina. Gracias al proyecto. Bueno no me alcanzó pero mi esposo aportó. Mi cuñado me ayudó a construir. Con el crédito no me alcanzaba pero ya usted ve. Poco a poco.

Yes, it was improved, in the sense that I could enlarge it. I didn't have a kitchen. Thanks to the project. Well, it was not enough but my husband contributed. My brother-in-law helped me to build. I couldn't afford the cost with the credit, but now you see; little by little.

Todos llegan (a la casa): eso sí te quedó grande, bonita, todo el que entra... me le faltan detalles pero...

People come (to the house): how big and pretty it is... every person who comes... it still needs some details...

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Yo, por lo menos, quedé muy contenta y mi esposo también y estamos porque vino alguien a prestar para esos proyectos y esos proyectos tienen de mucha ayuda para el barrio. Pero no seguí por el compañero que nos tocó, uh... yo quisiera seguir pero el compañero tenía que pagar la deuda.

At least, I am very happy and my husband either, because someone came to lend us money for those projects and they represent many help for the barrio. However, I didn't continue with the other person of my group. I wanted to continue but my partner had to pay the debt.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Sí, por lo menos, vuelvo y le digo, los hijos míos están muy contentos y yo también.

Yes, they have, at least, my sons are happy and either am I.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

¿De los primeros talleres? En San Ramón (iglesia cercana al barrio) fueron. Nos enseñaron a jugar, a compartir ideas, como queríamos el barrio, a conocer a los de los grupos. Me parecieron chéveres. Uno llegaba allí con preocupaciones y entre juegos salían más relajados. En verdad, compartimos y reímos mucho.

My opinion of the initial workshops? They were offered in San Ramón (nearby church). They taught us to play, to share ideas, how we wanted to see the barrio, to know the groups. They seemed me nice. One arrived there with worries and, after playing, we left more relaxed. In fact, we share and laughed a lot.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Aprendí. Pero yo había construido primero. Supe cuanto y como se usa la arena, el granzón. Bueno, si pude hacerlo mejor de cómo construir, la ventilación pero construí como yo pensé. Yo casi no rellené porque el terreno siempre ha estado alto.

I learned, however I had built before the workshops. I learned to calculate the amount of material. I could do it better, the construction, the ventilation, but I built in the way I thought. The location of my lot has always been high.

Aquí más bien la lluvia se ha ido llevando la arena pero el terreno así es todo alto.

However, the water rain has eroded the soil. The lot is still high.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Bueno, si, los talleres son buenos. Se aprenden muchas cosas. Pero a veces no podemos ir. Usted sabe! Los pobres debemos trabajar y a veces no se puede ir. En la iglesia fui como a dos o tres. En Bella Vista (sede de Hábitat Luz) fui a los de construcción. Si son buenos pero a veces el tiempo no le permite.

Well, the workshops are good. You learn a lot of things. But sometimes we cannot go. You know! The poor must work and sometimes we cannot attend. I attended two or three at the church. In Bella Vista (at HABITAT-LUZ), I attended the construction workshops. Yes, they are good but sometimes the lack of time does not allow us.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Bueno, que le puedo decir. Yo siempre he sido igual, aunque para mí yo no cambié porque siempre me la he llevado bien. Cuando tengo que portarme mal me pongo mal. Yo en la alcaldía me conocen como la peleona. Yo estaba en la asociación de vecinos peleando los proyectos del barrio. Una vez fuimos, tardamos todo el día allá. A las tres salió la secretaria del alcalde y yo me metí como sea y nos atendió. Hasta nos sacaron con la policía esa vez.

I have always been the same, but for me, I didn't change because I have always had good relationships. If I have to behave badly, then I do it. At the municipality they know me as the quarrelsome. I was in the neighborhood association fighting for the projects for the barrio. Once we went, and we waited all day. At three pm the secretary of the mayor came out and I demanded her to listen to us. They even used the police.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

De esa forma es buena cuando todos compartimos la idea en lo que estamos. Nos enseñaron que teníamos que apoyarnos. Yo fui a hablar con X (miembro del grupo).

It is good in that way; when we all share the same idea. They taught us that we had to support each other. I talked to Mister X (member of the group).

Me decía que él no tenía reales. Que no iba a pagar porque como eso (el dinero) era del gobierno... y a la vista está que no canceló. Yo creo que nada. Yo iba y le decía: nos toca pagar a nosotros.

He said that he didn't have enough money, that he was not going to pay because it was the government's money... and you can see that he didn't pay, I believe he paid nothing. I told him that we had to pay for him instead.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Cuando venían los del Sami ellos me decían que no había cancelado (X) y el me decía a mí que había cancelado. El me decía a mí: yo no tengo reales, imagínate que yo no tengo plata. El era contratista y a él le quedaba plata. Vaya a ver su casa, la tiene muy bonita. El no ha cancelado porque el no ha querido. El sabía que nos perjudicaba porque éramos un grupo. Yo le deje de hablar de eso, ahora nos llevamos bien. A mi esposo le dijo: "que voy a estar pagando, eso es del gobierno.... No cancelen". Yo pagaba siempre. Si me caía igual iba y pagaba. El señor Y (otro miembro de su grupo) fue muy puntual, a veces se caía y aun el cancelaba. Salíamos los dos casi igual.

When the people from Sami came, they told me that Mr. X had not paid, but he told me the opposite. He said to me: I do not have money; imagine that I do not have money either. There was a contractor and he made money. Take a look of his house, it is very pretty. He hasn't paid because he does not want to. He knew that he would affect us because we were a group. I did not talk to him after that, but now we get along well. He said to my husband: "I am not paying, that comes from the government.... Do not pay". I always paid on time, or later. Mister Y (another member of the group) was punctual, sometimes he was also late but he paid. We both finished at the same time.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

¿Los problemas? Ahorita es las calles. La Av. 20 siempre es un problema. La cañada siempre crece. Hay un proyecto de embaulamiento desde hace muuuucho. Como hace 10 años, si no me equivoco, que hicieron el proyecto. Al final, no hicieron nada. Antes no teníamos problemas de agua. Con la urbanización dejó de llegar. Aquí había fuerza de agua y con la urbanización quedamos sin agua prácticamente por ellos.

The problems? Right now the streets are the problem. The 20th Avenue is always a problem. The cañada always overflows. There has been a project for that since a lot of time ago, about 10 years, if I am not wrong. At the end, nothing was done. Before we did not have problems with the water. With the housing complex, the water stopped coming out because of them.

No les da la gana. A veces no llega en tres días y tenemos que traer agua con unas mangueras desde otras casas por allá (apunta hacia la otra manzana). Aparte de la avenida 20, el asfaltado fue como que muy débil y se lo lleva la cañada. Puede ver los huecos. Quedaron también que echarían allá el asfalto, marcaron y se fue la contratista y quedó así. Eso ya hace bastante.

They do not care. At times it does not come in three days and we have to bring water with some hoses from other nearby houses. In addition to the 20th avenue, the street pavement was very weak and the water ran it off. You can see the holes. A contractor came, marked the asphalt and said they were coming back but they left and the street remained the same. That was a long time ago.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

(¿? Piensa)... yo por lo menos si estuviera metida en lo que ahora son juntas de vecinos, o como será? los consejos comunales. No recuerdo. Yo movería y volvería a pelear a que volviera a bajar la contratista. Eso lo haría yo.

(¿? The person thinks)... I would be, at least, in what it is now the board of neighbors, or what is that? The communal councils. I do not remember. I would fight again to make the contractor come back. That is what I would do.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Si me lo transmitió. Si ellos no hubieran llegado aquí a decir que me iban a ayudar en el proyecto. Yo con eso me animé mucho.

Yes, they transmitted that to me. If they had not arrived here to say that they were going to help me in the project. I was very enthusiastic.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Siiii, es muy importante porque, por lo menos se está pendiente de que proyectos y recursos que bajan. Por lo menos esta es nuestra casa (se refiere al barrio) y debemos verla más bonita.

Yes, it is important because, at least, one is aware of the projects and resources that come to the barrio. This is our home (the barrio) and we have to see it prettier.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Yo pertenezco a la junta de vecinos y yo no me metí en el consejo comunal. Gracias a Dios movimos y movimos al barrio por medio de la alcaldía.

I belonged to the neighborhood board but I didn't join the communal council. Thanks to God we moved and moved the barrio in the municipality.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Fui vocal. Se reunían aquí en mi casa. Casi los organismos venían a parar aquí y me buscaban a mí. Usted ve la calle (apunta a su calle en la esquina donde se acumula el agua y hay huecos). Yo soy de las que echamos piedras en los huecos. Los vecinos también han tirado allí, sino estuviera peor (la calle).

I was a member. They used to meet here in my house. The agencies came here and they asked for me. You see the street (with water and holes). I am one of those who cover the holes with stones. The neighbors have also done it; otherwise it would be worse (the street).

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

Hasta hace poco (estuvo activa en el grupo). No me acuerdo pero yo se que fue hace bastante. Yo soy mala para fechas y nombres. Se ríe...

Until recently, (she was active with the group). I do not remember but that was a long time ago. I am bad with dates and names (and laughs)...

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

A veces necesito mucho tiempo. Usted sabe que tiene que estar uno metido en la alcaldía y estar constante. Mi esposo empezó a pelear (con ella) porque me la pasaba en eso. Yo solo era vocal pero el presidente y el vicepresidente trabajaban y todos venían a parar en mi casa. Entonces como yo estaba en la casa.... Ellos tenían que ir al final porque yo no podía firmar por ellos.

Sometimes I need a lot of time. You know that one has to be in the municipality and be constant. My husband began to fight (with her) because I was doing that all the time. I was only a member, the president and the vice president worked but everybody came to my house. And as I was at home.... But at the end, they had to go (to the municipality) because I was not the legal representative.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

A mí me gusta ayudar a la comunidad, yo se lo digo... tanto que está dando Chávez y el gobierno. Yo veo que va pa'otras (comunidades). Antes se veía cualquier cosa entrando y saliendo. Siempre estábamos activos. Lo que necesitábamos nos movíamos. Tengo mañanitas que no veo a la gente de la alcaldía. Yo digo que es que no se mueven (los del barrio).

I like helping the community, let me tell you... and so much that Chávez and the government are giving. I see that it (the aid) goes to another (communities). Before one could things coming in and leaving. We were always active. We worked for what we needed. I have not seen the people from the municipality for days. I think that the do nothing (people from the barrio).

Quizás ellos no tienen tiempo tampoco. “No, es que yo quiero y me meto”, dice la gente. Creen que les van a pagar por eso. Creo que si les dieran un sueldo trabajarían.

Perhaps they do not have time either. "Not, it is that I want and I participate", people say. They believe that they are going to be paid for that. I think that if they had a salary they would work.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

No.

No, I do not.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Es buenísimo que lo continúen. A mí me gustaría, pero a mi si me lo dieran solo. Ya ustedes (el programa) me aprobaron a mí, ya yo fui puntual y pagué. Como mi esposo decía que no iba a pagarles deuda a los demás que estaban mejor que él.... Bueno, ya él murió. Si incluso estuviera enfermo o en cama haría el esfuerzo pero X ganaba más que él. Continuaría porque me prestan la ayuda porque termino la casa como me hace falta. Ponerla más bonita. Le faltan detallitos. Por lo menos la cocina y el frente (área del porche). Yo le pido y si me lo dan a mi yo lo agarro. Con la ayuda de mis hijos yo lo agarro. Me gustaría mucho, mucho es por los reales como me prestan los reales.

It would be very good that it continues. I would like it, but to me, I would prefer to go along. You (the program) already approved my first loan, I paid on time. My husband said he was not going to pay other people's debts if they were better off than us.... Well, he already died. He would only make an effort in case he was sick or in bed, but Mr. X made more money than he. I would continue because they offer me the help in order to finish the house the way I need it and make it prettier. Some small details... at least the kitchen and the front porch. I ask for it and if they give it to me, I take it. With the support of my sons, I take it. I would like it a lot, the money they lend me.

INTERVIEW 34
BARRIO ROMULO GALLEGOS

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Magnífico, porque uno aprende a compartir y segundo a tener un poco más de eso, como te explico, como de responsabilidad en eso. Bueno, porque por lo menos, comparte y aprende muchas cosas, a tener responsabilidad.

Fantastic, because one learns to share and second, to have a little more of that, How can I explain you?, like having responsibility in that. Well, because, at least, one shares and learns many things, to be responsible.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

No me acuerdo. Yo se que era la gente del Sami. También eran de la universidad, pero no sé quien de ellas.

I do not remember. I know it was people from the Sami. They were also from the university, but I do not know who from the group of people.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Por supuesto que sí. Yo hice con lo que me dieron, un millón, en la cocina y el cuarto, la pura estructura. Yo la hice completa. Eso lo hice yo mismo. Yo soy albañil y por supuesto, me ahorro la mano de obra con mi hermano. Hice la estructura y el bloque hasta allí llegue con el crédito y seguí con otra cosa.

Of course, yes I do. I did, with what I received, a million bolivars, the structure of the kitchen and the bedroom only. I did it completely. I did it myself. I am a bricklayer and, of course, I save the labor cost with the help of my brother. I did the structure and the walls with the loan and I continued with another thing.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Muy bueno. Yo en ese tiempo yo no tenía las condiciones de trabajo en ese momento. Estaba fijo, usted sabe cómo están los proyectos. A mi esposa le encantó. Esto era bajo, bajo. El patio de esa casa, de allí pasaba el agua por aquí por el patio a la cañada.

Very good. At that time, I did not have the working conditions that I have now. It was working, but you know how the projects are. My wife loved it. That (the lot) was low. The rain water used to come from my neighbor's patio, and pass through my backyard to the cañada.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

No hice los talleres técnicos y los de ciudadanía si los hice. Todo chévere. Por lo menos para mi familia yo nunca antes había ahorrado. Logré abrir la cuenta y aprendí a ahorrar. Algunas cosas se me han dado.

I did not do the technical workshops but the citizenship ones. Everything was nice. At least, for my family I had never saved before. I managed to open the saving account and I learned to save. I was able to accomplish some things.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

De verdad que si valió la pena. Ellos capacitan a uno para ser responsable. Yo te voy a explicar algo. Yo nunca he pagado. Me llamó el abogado para hacer un acuerdo. Yo hablé con él porque yo quería pagar pero que así en las condiciones que el me decía no podía. El nunca aceptó, era muy odioso y le dije que entonces no iba a pagar nada. Eso es algo que me inquieta y no me convenía.

Truly, it was worth while. They teach people how to be responsible. Let me explain you something. I have never paid. The lawyer called me to do an agreement. I spoke with him because I wanted to pay but not in the terms he told me. He never accepted, he was very repulsive and I told him that then I was not going to pay anything. That is something that worries me but I could not afford it.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Responsabilidad, me hablaron del ahorro. (no se acuerda más).

Responsibility, they talked to me about saving (the person does not remember anything else).

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Me parecieron todos perfectos. Aparte te digo que algunas veces uno se distraía. Era como otra rutina. Me gustaba mucho ir porque me sentía en otra cosa muy a gusto.

They seemed all perfect for me. I tell you sometimes I had a good time. It was like a routine. I liked going because I felt different, and delighted.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Si por supuesto. Ellos enseñan a uno a ver las cosas de otra manera. No me sé explicar...

Yes, of course. They teach us to see things differently. I do not know how to explain...

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

El grupo fue muy bueno. A veces que nos encontramos, nos alegramos, nos abrazamos. Como fue algo bueno nos hemos mantenido. Siempre que me encuentro, nos saludamos. Del grupo, ellos siguieron, todavía hasta el presente.

The group was very good. Some time when we meet, we are happy, and we hug each other. Since it was something good, we have been in touch. Every time I run into one of them, we greet. From that group, they continued, and they still do. She always mentions that.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Nunca una mala actitud, siempre muy unidos. Ellos han tratado de solucionarlo por mí allá en el Sami. Directamente se puede. Recuerdas a M (otra beneficiaria), eso se lo hice yo (trabajo del techo) gracias al crédito. Yo le dije que quería ayudarla para que le rindiera. Ayudé en lo que más pude (en la construcción). Ella logró hacer porque yo la ayudé mucho. Ella siempre lo dice.

I never had a bad attitude, always together. They have tried to solve my problem in Sami, directly. Do you remember Mrs. M (another beneficiary)? I did her construction thanks to the loan. I told her that I was going to help her save some money. She could achieve it because I helped her. She always mentions it.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

El principal problema es el agua. Tenemos el problema de las casitas (conjunto residencial próximo). Hasta que no se surten de agua no viene a coger fuerza. Tenemos acueducto pero no llega el agua. El segundo es la vialidad muy mala. Aquí no entra un taxi. Eso es la vialidad, y la cañada...

The main problem is the water. We have the problem of the little houses (nearby gated community). First they get the water and later us. We have the infrastructure but the water does not arrive. The second (problem) is the very bad streets. Not even a taxi wants to come. Those are the streets, and the cañada...

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

¿Qué quisiera hacer yo? Yo por parte mía solo no creo solucionarlo. Yendo a los organismos pero ellos no responden.

What would I do? I do not think I cannot solve them by myself. We would go to the agencies but they do not respond.

Hemos ido grupos de gente de aquí a Hidrolago (suplidor de agua), hemos hablado, firmado actas. Se comprometen pero nada.

complained, and signed forms. They make a compromise, but nothing happens.

As a group, we have gone to Hidrolago (water supplier). We have

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Por supuesto que sí. Soy colaborador. No pertenezco (al grupo vecinal). Comparto ideas con ellos. Ellos me invitan y trato de lograr cosas con ellos. Hemos logrado un dispensario, eso está en camino. Compramos un terreno con crédito, bueno... a la junta.

Definitively yes. I collaborate. I do not belong to the group (communal council). I share ideas with them. They invite me and I try to achieve things with them. We have achieved a health facility, which is on its way. We bought a piece of land, well... the board did.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Como no. Por lo menos, te oyen las inquietudes tuyas.

Of course. At least, they listen to your concerns.

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

No pertenezco. Solo colaboro.

I am not part of it. I only collaborate.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Como ya le dije: asisto, comparto ideas y cuando hay que ir a un sitio vamos, Hidrolago, alcaldía, Fondur, algo así.

As I told you, I attend meetings, share ideas and when we have to go somewhere Fondur, Hidrolago, the Municipality... something like that.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

Tengo bastante (tiempo) con la asociación de vecinos y más recientemente con la junta comunal.

I have been in the neighborhood association for a long time, and more recently in the communal council.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

No aplica.

It does not apply.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

No aplica.

It does not apply.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

No.

No, I do not.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Si hay la oportunidad. Bueno, estando al día con ellos y volver a solicitar el crédito. Ellos te ayudan. Lógico que tienes que pagarlo. Algo con lo que uno no cuenta. Mi mujer ha visto que el grupo ha seguido avanzando y ve que por lo menos la cerca es lo que más nos preocupa. Si ves la casa ahorita, ves que falta eso. Es la meta. Te sientes apartado para pagar pero, a veces, no te sale así. Yo me considero así, no es por nada. Tengo la inquietud de pagarla pero a la larga me perjudica.

If there is the opportunity, I participate... Well, by paying the debt and applying for another loan. They help you, but, logically, you have to pay it. It is something that we do not have. My wife has perceived that the group has followed advancing and she says that she is worried about the fence. If you see the house right now, see that we need the fence. It is the goal. You feel you have to pay but at times, you cannot do it. I have to pay because eventually, in the short run, I will not benefit.

INTERVIEW 35
BARRIO M. ANGELICA DE LUSINCHI

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Bueno, para mí fue una experiencia bonita ya que allí conocí más gente y fue un aprendizaje para uno. Pero lo malo fue eso, me dieron la mitad de lo que yo solicité. En verdad no tengo colaboración de mi marido y por eso me desilusioné.

Well, for me it was a pretty experience because I got to meet more people there and it was a learning. However, the bad part of it was that they gave me just half of what I asked for. In fact, my husband did not help me I felt disenchanting.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

Recuerdo a Hábitat-Luz de la Universidad del Zulia y no me acuerdo.... Ahhh de la alcaldía.

I remember HABITAT-LUZ from the University of Zulia... and do not remember.... Ahh, the municipality.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Yo quería sacar la cocina de allá atrás y hacer la construcción para eso. Mi marido empezó a desilusionarme. Además era muy poco lo que me dieron. En verdad yo me gasté el dinero y no hice la mejora en su momento. Pero igual, yo pagué.

I wanted to move the kitchen from the back patio and build it within the house. My husband made me feel disillusioned. Besides, what they lent me was too little. In fact, I spent all the money and didn't do the improvement at that moment. Nevertheless I paid.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Mi esposo no tuvo nada que ver con el crédito. Cuando yo iba al taller él peleaba. Él siempre ha tenido temor a fiar (deber dinero prestado). Además, yo soy la mujer de aquí y con eso él se desespera. Yo me muevo mucho y yo pagué muchísimo.

My husband had nothing to do with the credit. He argued everytime I went to a workshop. He has always been worried when he owes money. Moreover, I am the woman here and with that, he is desperate. I did a lot and paid.

- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
 No pude lograr el cambio, la muestra está allí (apunta al lugar del proyecto). No se hizo nada. *I couldn't accomplish the change, the proof is here (indicates the site of the project). Nothing was done.*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
 Al pelo (todo bien), por lo que le dije. Uno se divierte. Es algo diferente, conocer más gente de la misma comunidad, que antes no nos tratábamos. Siempre nos preguntamos cuando nos vemos que como estamos. *Everything was fine, as I told you. We have fun. It is something different, getting to know people from the community we did not know before. We always ask each other how we are when we meet.*
- 1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?**
 Nos dieron relaciones humanas. Nos hacían juegos muy divertidos, de cómo aprender a invertir la plata (el dinero), de cómo administrarlo. Nos nombraban mucho lo de la cuenta del banco. Yo la tengo todavía. *They taught us about human relations. They made us play fun games to learn how to invest the money, and how to administer it. They told us a lot about the saving account. I still have it.*
- 1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?**
 Todos los talleres están bien, bien. *All the workshops are fine, just fine.*
- 1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?**
 Cada vez que venía de los talleres era un vainero (un pleito) con mi esposo. Mis hijos siempre han estado de acuerdo con que yo me supere. Ellos siempre me apoyan. Ya tengo dos en la universidad. Y yo con ellos igual. ¿Y con los vecinos? Con los vecinos, mucho. Nos conocimos más, ahora hay más compenetración. *Everytime I attended a workshop, I had a fight with my husband. My sons have always agreed that I shall self-improve. They always support me. Two of them are at the university. I do the same for them. With the neighbors? We improved a lot. We got to know each other better, and now we are more compenetrated.*

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Éramos tres. Creo que dos de ellas aún deben. Ah no, creo que es solo una ahora. Porque ella me dijo que ya había pagado. Yo me siento en capacidad de pagar.

We were three. I think that two of them still owe. Ah, no, it is only one, because she told me that she already had paid. I have the capacity to pay.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

La que quedó debiendo hace poco me dijo que se sentía mal por no haber pagado y que ella iba a pagar.

The person who still owes money recently told me that she felt bad because of that and that she was going to pay.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

¿Qué le puedo decir? El agua es una lucha constante porque no llega. Llega lo último que le dan a San Francisco (Municipio vecino). Aquí las calles están horribles. El aseo y la luz están bien.

come. We receive the rest of what San Francisco (bordering municipality) gets. Here the streets are terrible. The garbage collection and the electricity are fine.

What can I tell you? The water is a constant fight because it does not

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Una de las razones para contribuir fue por las que me metí en el consejo comunal. Estoy en el comité de salud.

I entered the communal council because as a reason to contribute. I am in the Health Committee.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

No recuerdo. Si creo que la mayoría que asistieron están ahora metidos en esto. Eso fue como un principio.

I do not remember. I do believe that the most of who attended are now involved in it (the program). That was like a beginning.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Claro que sí. Todo depende de uno. Ahorita mismo todos los proyectos vienen de Chavez. Todos dependen de la comunidad, de la motivación. Pero esta comunidad es muy

apática. Además asisten pocos a las reuniones.

Yes, of course. It all depends on you. Right now all the projects come from Chavez. It all depends on what the community could do, its motivation.

- Nevertheless, this community is very lethargic.*
- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**
- Sí, yo. Estoy en el consejo communal. Antes no, solo ahora. *Yes, I do. I am member of the communal council. I was not before, only at this moment.*
- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
- Empezamos con el comité de salud y los médicos cubanos de la misión Barrio Adentro. De allí nos organizamos y luego nos reintegramos al consejo comunal. *We started with the health committee and the Cuban doctors from the Mission Barrio Adentro. We organized and later joined the communal council.*
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
- Cuando llegó Barrio Adentro, calculo que como en 2002. *When “Barrio Adentro” (Government Program) arrived to the barrio. I think it was in 2002.*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
- No aplica. *It does not apply.*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
- No aplica. *It does not apply.*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
- Está el Consejo Comunal. Del gobierno está la guardería, la casa de los abuelos, la Misión Rivas (Bachillerato asistido), la Misión Barrio Adentro. Tenemos un CDI (Centro de Diagnóstico Integral de Salud) pero no sé lo que pasa que no lo abren. Fuimos a protestar pero llegó PDVSA y nos dijo que iban a terminar y nada, no paso nada... y nos convencieron de que nos fuéramos. *There is the communal council, the daycare from the government, the nursing home, the Mission Rivas (high school education for adults), the Mission Barrio Adentro. We also have a CDI (health facility) but I do not know what happens because it is not working. We protested at PDVSA and we were told that it was going to be concluded (the construction), but nothing... we trusted them and left.*

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Yo no le tengo miedo. La meta mía fue pagar. Me atrasé un poquito nada más. Claro que si continúo. Yo tengo buena palabra. Mi sueño es hacer una tiendita aquí en el frente. Por lo menos para mejorar la casa tenemos esperanza con la solicitud del comité de tierra.

I am not afraid to continue. My goal was to pay. Yes, I would continue. I have my word. My dream is to open a small store here in the front of my house. At least, we have the hope that we will repair the house with the application through the committee of land.

INTERVIEW 36
BARRIO M. ANGELICA DE LUSINCHI

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Fue bueno porque me beneficié mucho de allí. Yo tuve la opción de mejorar la cerca hasta donde me alcanzó.
It was good because I benefited a lot from it. I had the option of improving the fence until the loan let me.
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
A la alcaldía y otro, no recuerdo. Hay lo tengo anotado porque no recuerdo. Yo estuve buscando porque fui para el Sami hace dos meses.
The municipality and another, I do not remember. I have it written because I do not remember. I was looking for it because I went to the Sami two months ago.
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
Lo que necesito hacer son dos piezas (habitaciones) en el fondo para solucionar el problema. Al hacer las piezas busco la salida del agua para no inundarme cuando llueve. Hicimos el relleno. Ya pedí un nuevo préstamo y estoy esperando desde hace tres meses. En eso mejoré la cerca por seguridad con la familia. Sin embargo, todavía faltan varias cosas por hacer aquí.
Two bedrooms in the back of the house is what we need to build in order to solve the flood problem that I have when it rains. We already had raised the ground level. I asked for a loan and I have been waiting since three months ago. I repaired the fence for the security of my family. Nevertheless, I still have a few things to do here.
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
Con el primer crédito sentimos mucha emoción, que verdaderamente fue útil. Es más, mi misma familia me dio la idea de ir y seguir, pero yo no tuve como responder por los demás (los que no pagaron en su grupo).
We were very happy with the first credit, which was useful. Moreover, my own family gave me the idea that I should continue, but I did not have (money) to respond for the others (those who did not pay).

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

A mí me sirvió de mucho las orientaciones, de cómo no malgastar el dinero. Me enseñaron a ahorrar un poquito. No es que se ahorre mucho por la situación de ahora. Por lo menos, yo que tengo muchachos, hay que hacer un sacrificio. A mí me sirvieron por la orientación que me dieron.

The orientation helped me a lot... on how to prevent the misuse of money. They taught me to save a little. It is not that we save a lot because of the current situation, at least, I do not have kids. We have to sacrifice. I used the guidance they offered me.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Opino que están bien. Si uno sigue yendo, más se aprende, más se orienta uno.

My personal opinion is that it is fine. If I keep going, the more I learn, the more I receive guidance.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Ya sí que me quedo pensando (no recuerda).

Now let me think (the person does not remember).

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

A mí me pareció que nos fue bien para ser el primer curso (de este tipo). En los de vivienda por lo menos uno se orienta cuando uno va a hacer un techo, la ventilación y otras cosas.

For me, we did well with the first training (workshops of this kind). Concerning the house, one receives guidance on how to build a roof, on the ventilation and other things.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Ha mejorado. No en exceso pero si ha mejorado. En la forma del ahorro, saberse uno controlar. Pues estuvo bien. No es que uno quiera quedar mal, más bien al contrario, yo hablaba con ellos, tenía una buena comunicación.

It has improved, not excessively, but I has in regard to saving, controlling the expenses. It was fine. It is not that I do not want to pay, in the contrary; we talked about it and had good communication.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Fue bien. Por lo menos, si uno quedaba mal, no es que uno no quería, entonces hablábamos de que era lo que pasaba, de que teníamos un problemita. Nos comunicábamos a ver que pasaba.

It was fine. At least, if one did not pay, it is not that we did not want to, then we talked about what was going on, about the problem we had. We communicated with each other to assess what to do.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Decentemente. Porque usted sabe que hay gente que paga bien y otros que no. Así es, cuando uno está informado actúa de otra manera con el grupo.

It was decent. Because, you know, there are people who pay well but others do not. That is it. When one is properly informed, one behaves differently with the group.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

Dios... la inseguridad, no tenemos cloacas. Luchó cuando tengo lluvia. Se empoza el agua atrás. Tenemos dieciséis años aquí y sobrellevamos las cosas.

God... the insecurity, we do not have sewer. I suffer when it rains. The water floods my patio. We have been here for sixteen years and we deal with all this.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Como dice uno, en la unión está la fuerza. Si todos nos unimos, puede ser que logremos algo. Aquí hay mucho egoísmo, desunión. Claro, si uno va a trabajar piensan que lo que va a hacer uno es robar o agarrar para dar de comer a mi familia. Ni lo uno ni lo otro.

As I say, if we are united we will have the strength. If we are united, we may achieve something. There is a lot of selfishness, and lack of unity among us. But if I go to work people think that I am going to steal or get something to feed my family. Neither one thing nor the other.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Sí, bastante. Porque en ese momento se sentía a todo el mundo emocionado para trabajar y después se apagó. Yo no sé que pasó allí. Ya cada quien trabaja a su manera.

Yes, I do. Because at that moment people felt motivated to work, but later it (that feeling) lessened. I do not know what happened there. Each person works in his own way.

- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**
 Claro. Porque como le dije, no es lo mismo trabajar uno solo, sino diez. Ya hay más gente pensando, hay más opciones.
Yes, I do. Because, it is not the same if one person works alone that if ten do it. There is more people thinking, there are more options.
- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**
 No. hemos colaborado sí. Si ellos vienen y nos dicen, si. No nos han dado la oportunidad, como ya los escogieron.... Pero si voy a las reuniones.
No, we do not. We have collaborated. If they come and ask for it, we do help. We have not had the opportunity since they were already chosen... nevertheless I attend the meetings.
- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
 No pertenece. Voy a las reuniones a ver que es lo que dicen o que hablan. Colaboro, como cuando piden para los pasajes, en la papelería.
I do not belong. I go to the meetings to listen to what they say. I collaborate, like when they ask for money to pay for transportation or paper supplies.
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 No participa.
(The person does not participate).
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
 Aquí no hay buena información. Como le dije, no me avisan y no me entero.
Here, we do not have good information. As I told you, nobody notifies me and I am not informed.
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
 Por ahorita no. Estoy muy complicada. Mi hija estudia en las mañanas. Además tengo la bodega que atender. Yo quedo al frente de todo en la casa.
Not right now, I am very busy. My daughter studies in the mornings. Besides I have a little store that I take care of. I am in charge of everything at home.
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
 Uno solo, al Consejo Comunal.
Only one, the communal council.
- 2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?**
 Sí, para ver si me siguen ayudando. Y si hay la oportunidad, yo voy.
Yes, I would, in order to see if they continue helping me. If there is an opportunity, I go.

INTERVIEW 37
BARRIO M. ANGELICA DE LUSINCHI

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Yo tuve dos créditos con el programa. Todo estuvo bien, no tuve ningún problema. Me parece muy bueno porque son mejoras para la comunidad. Trae talleres que en verdad nos parecían buenos también.

I have received two loans with the program. Everything was fine, I had no problem. It seems very good to me because these are improvements for our community. It brings workshops, which are very good as well.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

A HABITAT-LUZ, la Universidad, a Yvis en el Sami, al Sr. D. (El asesor) también.

HABITAT-LUZ, the University, Yvis from Sami, and Mr. D (the economic advisor).

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Si, por lo menos con el primer crédito hice las tomas del tanque y el segundo me dio para hacer la cerca, faltándole solo el portón.

Yes, I do. At least, with my first loan I did the water tank connections, and with the second I was able to build the fence. I still need the front door.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Yo, particularmente yo, tenía que comprar el agua y la tenía que cargar desde el frente hasta lo último de la casa. Era un dolor en el cuerpo por el peso todo el día. Hice esas tomas y mejoró la cosa. Con la cerca logramos el resguardo por la inseguridad.

I, in particular, had to buy water and had to carry it front the entrance to the back of the house. I body hurt all day long. I did the water connections and the thing improved. With the fence We increased our protection with the construction of the fence.

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

Yo, particularmente yo, pienso que es ahora más cómodo, al bañarse, con solo abrir la llave.

I, in particular, think that it is more comfortable now, when taking a shower, and only opening the water.

Los talleres también... Yo era la que asistía. Las mejoras personales significan un bienestar también y se reían en los talleres. Además uno ve las mejoras en cada casa.

The workshops also... I was the one who attended. The personal self-development means a better wellbeing and people laugh a lot in the workshops. Besides, one sees the improvements in each house.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Fueron varios los talleres. Los hicimos acá mismo en la comunidad.

There were a few workshops. We attended all of them here in the same community.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Aprendí como habilitar más en cuanto a áreas verdes y recreativas, como dirigirnos, el individuo, para lograr esas mejoras. A veces no tenemos la capacidad, o sea, yo puedo estar instruida pero si yo no salgo a la comunidad a saber de los problemas y a solucionarlos. Yo antes era de mi casa al trabajo. Ahora que no trabajo, ya en mi casa empecé a involucrarme. Incluso, yo soy peluquera e hice como tres talleres en la comunidad ya que tenía más facilidad para hacerlo después de los talleres.

I learned more about green and recreational areas, to approach others, to achieve the improvements. Sometime we have not the capacity, for example, I can be educated but if I do not go out in my community. I do not know the problems and how to solve them. I used to go from home to my work. Now that I am not working, I am more involved. I am a hairdresser and attended three workshops in the community and I work after them.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Como todo, uno siempre piensa que me hubiese gustado una cosa o la otra. Al principio, era como muy largo y siempre sentía que era el mismo tema. Aquí, como era en la misma comunidad, era con un menor nivel para la comunidad (lenguaje utilizado). Había personas con menor nivel (de instrucción, de cultura), los que teníamos mejor nivel teníamos que esperar porque había que hacerle entender a estas personas.

Like everything else, I always think that I had liked one thing or the other. At the beginning, it was like very long and I always felt that they were all the same themes. As it was here in the community, the contents were basic to reach the education level of residents (language used). There were people with low level (of instruction), those who had higher level had to wait sometimes because these people could not understand at once.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Por lo menos había un taller muy dinámico. De cómo cerrando los ojos queríamos ver la comunidad, que se yo. Yo imaginé un carro, hasta una piscina en mi casa. Yo con los vecinos, gracias a Dios, soy dada a las personas. Por aquí todo el mundo me respeta. Dicen que yo siempre participé en los talleres y hasta salí en un video.

At least there was a very dynamic workshop on how, closing our eyes, we wanted to see the community, I do not know... I imagined a car, even a pool in my house. I, with the neighbors, thanks to God, am kind with them. Everyone respects me around here. They say that I always participated in the workshops and that I was recorded in a video.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

En el grupo éramos cuatro. Es trabajar con la comunidad, así es, fuerte. Tienen caracteres distintos (las personas y los miembros del grupo). Hay que hacer de tripas corazones. Hay que adaptarse.

We were four in the group. It is working for the community, strongly. People have different characters. We have to deal with that. One must adapt.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Me fue bien. Eran responsables. Lograron sus metas en cuanto a lo que solicitaban en el crédito. Una de ellas se fue a España, sin embargo ella nos envía saludos con sus hijas que están aquí.

We did well. They were responsible. They all achieved their goals, and what they needed to do with the loan. One of them left for Spain, nevertheless she used to send her greetings with her daughters, who live here.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

El agua se mete cuando llueve. La calle está más alta después que la asfaltaron. No tenemos cloacas, ahora es que las están terminando. Imagínese el desastre cuando trabajen aquí en frente. El agua potable es otro problema. Tengo que levantarme a las dos de la madrugada cada dos días para agarrar agua y llenar el tanque.

The water comes inside the house when it rains. The street is higher after it was paved. We do not have sewer, right now, it's been built. You can imagine the disaster when they work in front of my house. The water provision is another problem. I have to wake up at two in the morning every other day to fill the tank.

Tengo un pozo séptico pero se rebosa cuando llueve.

I have a septic tank but it overflows when it rains.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

A veces me dan como ganas de irme de aquí. Pero aquí tengo ya 22 años. Mi esposo dice que “yo no me voy de aquí”. Pero como uno le tomó cariño a las cosas y aquí estamos, ni modo. ¿Eso es cómo que hacer? Para incentivar y que la gente tome conciencia. Ha sido fuerte (difícil) que la gente se integren. La gente solo quiere quedarse en sus casa y piden que vengan a solucionarles las cosas.

Sometimes I feel I want to leave the barrio. However, I have been living here for 22 years. My husband says that he does not leave from here. We love these things and we are still here, what else can we do? What can be done? Promote the incentive and the consciousness building. It has been difficult to integrate people. People only want to stay at home and ask for the solution of their problems.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Bueno, en los talleres ese era el énfasis, de trabajar unidos, de que la comunidad mejorase.

Wells, that was the emphasis in the workshops, working together, the fact that the community could improve.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Sí, tantas razones que hay. Yo he trabajado bastante. A veces digo no más pero uno siempre quiere estar activa. Si uno tiene las herramientas ¿Por qué no hacerlo?

Yes, I do. There are some many reasons. I have worked a lot. Sometimes I say no more but I always want to be active. If one has the tools, Why not do it?

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Sí, yo.

Yes, I do.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Ahorita no. Participé en la Asociación de vecinos que ahora ha cambiado a Consejo Comunal.

Not right now. I participated in the neighborhood association that recently changed to a communal council.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

No participa en estos momentos.

(The person does not participate at this moment).

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

Estuve enferma y tuve muchos inconvenientes. Ahora no participo directamente. Pero llegan y colaboro cuando me lo piden.

I was sick and had many troubles. Now, I do not participate directly, but people come to me and I collaborate when they ask me.

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Siempre he trabajado pero ahora solo como colaborador.

I have always worked, but now only as collaborator.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

El Consejo Comunal. Por lo menos acá en el galpón ese es una guardería. Allí están las hermanas Agustinas Recoletas, Asodamas de la alcaldía y las Aldeas Infantiles. Ahorita inauguraron la casa de los Abuelos. Allá van por las comidas y pasan el día. Es de la alcaldía.

The comunal council. At least here that facility is a daycare, with the Sisters Agustinas Recoletas, Asodamas from the municipality and Aldeas Infantiles. The nursing home was recently opened. The erderly can stay there during the day and have some food. It is a municipal service.

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

Si me lo dan, sí. Yo sé que tengo la responsabilidad de pagar. Lo que tengo en mente es levantar este piso y el techo para solucionar el problema del agua cuando llueve.

If they give me loan. I know that I am responsible. What ther loan, yes I would I have in mind is to raise the floor and the roof level to solve the flood problem when it rains.

INTERVIEW 38
BARRIO M. ANGELICA DE LUSINCHI

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

- 1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?**
Eso fue muy poco (el dinero prestado). La expectativa que tenía no se pudo concretar. *That was just a little (the loan). I couldn't reach my expectation.*
- 1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?**
Ninguna. En realidad no recuerdo. *None. In fact, I do not remember.*
- 1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?**
No logré hacer la mejora porque era muy poco. Lo que hice fue mejorar con ese dinero unas cavas refrigeradoras que tengo en el local comercial al lado (es un centro de computación en la propia vivienda). *I couldn't do the project because it was not enough. What I did was to get the fridges, which I have in the store next door, fixed (local computer center).*
- 1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?**
No se realizó pues lo usé en eso y hay están. No hubo opinión. *The improvement was not accomplished because I used it (the money) in that (the refrigerators). (No more comments).*
- 1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?**
No hay cambio constructivo. *There was no physical improvement accomplished.*
- 1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?**
Nos supieron orientar en esas cosas. Me parecieron bien. *They guided us in many aspects. They seemed good to me.*

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Nos decían (los facilitadores) de como íbamos a trabajar con la plata, que hacer con el dinero. Fue aquí en la escuela. Como... aprender a convivir con los vecinos, con los demás, algo así. Yo tengo mala memoria...

They (the facilitators) told us how we were going to invest the money, what to do with it. It was here at the school. Like... learning to share with your neighbors, the others, something like that. I have bad memory...

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Nada, creo yo.

Nothing, I think.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

No hubo cambio (no logra especificar).

There was no perceivable change (could not specify).

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

No me gustó mucho la idea. Solo porque había que hacerlo lo acepté, porque la gente quedaba mal. No se si ellos quedaron bien o mal con sus créditos.

I did not like the idea that much. I accepted it only because I had to do it, because people didn't respond well. I do not know how they did with their credits.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Son todos vecinos míos. Llevamos una relación normal. Por eso no hubo enemistad y no existe hoy en día. Nos llevamos bien y nos comunicamos.

They are all my neighbors. We have a normal relationship. That is why there was no hostility and it doesn't exist nowadays. We get along well and communicate with each other.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

Uhnnn. De eso ni que hablar. Por supuesto, los servicios, las cloacas, el gas, el agua viene de vez en cuando, la inseguridad, la vialidad. Los carritos no quieren pasar por eso.

Uhnnn. I do not what to talk about that. In fact, the services, the sewer, the gas, the water, which comes once in a while, the insecurity, the streets, the carrito drivers (five-passanger cars) do not want to serve the barrio.

- 2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?**
 Hacer un paro, cerrar las calles por la vialidad que está que no se puede transitar. Solo está asfaltado un pedazo. De allí para allá no sirve nada. Es la única manera, protestando. *I would call for strike, close the streets to protest their bad condition. Only one section is paved. From that point, it is in poor condition. It is the only way, by protesting.*
- 2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?**
 Creo que sí. Hubo muchos que sí, pero a otros no les gustaron. *I believe so. There were many motivated people, but others did not like it.*
- 2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?**
 Si, claro. Si no participa la comunidad, ¿cómo puede haber soluciones? *Yes, sure. If the community does not participate then, how we could find solutions.*
- 2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?**
 No, ninguno. *No, no one does.*
- 2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?**
 No participa. *(The person does not participate).*
- 2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?**
 No participa. *(The person does not participate).*
- 2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?**
 Nunca me ha gustado y además, trabajo mucho. No hay tiempo para eso. *I have never liked it, and besides, I work a lot. There is no time for that.*
- 2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?**
 No me comprometería. *I would not compromise.*
- 2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?**
 Dicen que hay un consejo comunal pero esos no hacen nada. Estoy anotada en la lista para que supuestamente me entreguen una plata que están dando del gobierno. *People say that there is a communal council but it does nothing. I signed a list to receive some government money, I suppose.*

No estoy segura de que bajen esos recursos.

I am not sure those resources will come

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

No, porque a uno solo no se le puede prestar y los demás de por aquí no querían. Además, nunca llegué a preguntar. Yo sigo con mi microempresa y me han dado en otra empresa un préstamo. Tengo un carrito de línea. Pero si me interesa para mejorar la vivienda. Yo me atrasé pero al final pagué. Yo sigo teniendo el mismo problema con el techo que se llueve mucho. He ido cambiando las láminas pero falta mucho.

No, I would not, because I do not receive a loan if I apply along and the others do not want to. Besides, I never consulted that possibility. I continue with my business and I have received a credit from another agency. I have a carrito. Nevertheless, I am interested in a housing improvement credit. I was late on my payments but I finally paid. I still have the same problem. My house has roof leaks. I have replaced some roofing panels but it is a lot.

INTERVIEW 39
BARRIO M. ANGELICA DE LUSINCHI

PART 1. OPINION IN REGARD TO THE PROGRAM

1.1. What does it mean for you to participate in the Full Citizenship program?

Yo, en sí, casi no participé. Yo era de la asociación de vecinos y más que nada me debía a los contactos. Yo contactaba a la gente, les hablaba y los invitaba. Fue muy importante la ayuda que nos dieron.

I did not participate much. I belonged to the neighborhood association. I used to contact all the people, talked to them and invited them. The help that they provided was very important.

1.2. What institutions do you associate with the program?

A la alcaldía, a la universidad. No me acuerdo, ahhh, encabezados por Nuevo Amanecer.

The Municipality, the University. I do not remember... ahh, headed by Nuevo Amanecer.

1.3. Do you think your house was improved with the assistance of the program?

Si, muchas personas salieron de su ranchito. Yo nada más agarré un solo crédito y levanté la cerca, unos bloques y levanté el nivel del techo en el medio de la casa para ganar más declive.

Yes, many people replaced their little ranchos. I only received one loan and built the fence, a few blocks, and lifted up the roof in the center of the house to increase its inclination.

1.4. What do you or your family think about the improvement achieved in your dwelling with the assistance of the program?

Fue lograr una comodidad, una satisfacción de haber obtenido ese crédito. Los consejos que nos dieron de la vivienda y el hábitat, eso de sembrar más maticas. Porque el taller es eso...

It meant achieving betterment, a satisfaction for receiving that loan, and the guidance in terms of housing and habitat, planting trees. The workshop is about all that...

1.5. Do you think that the participatory process and the housing improvement loan changed the life of your family?

A muchos les trajo la alegría de obtener una mejoría. De haber ayudado a otros, en invitarlos a buscar las mejoras para la comunidad.

It brought to many the joy of accomplishing an improvement, of helping others, an invitation to seek the development of the community.

Después de eso se han hecho más mejoras en la casa. Nos hemos animado a hacer más cosas.

After that, they have made more improvements in their homes. We are motivated to do more things.

1.6. What is your opinion of the citizenship education that you received? Why?

Muy buenos, tantas cosas que uno no sabe... y vienen los talleres a la comunidad. Uno aprende a compartir con la gente, para las personas que venían de afuera, con los invitados, Nuevo Amanecer, la universidad que traía a los profesores.

They are very good, so many things that one does not know... and the workshops that come to the community. One learns to share with other people, with the people who come from other barrios, the guests, Nuevo Amanecer, the university, and the professors.

1.7. What do you remember from what you learned in the initial citizenship education workshops?

Los temas fueron el hábitat, que nosotros no nos dejemos vencer de la pobreza, superar la pobreza, mejorar la vivienda, asistir a los talleres. Bueno, de compartir, de cómo compartir, de cómo es la manera de vivir en la comunidad.

The topics were... the habitat, not giving fighting poverty, overcoming poverty, improving the dwelling, attending the workshops. Well, it was about sharing, and about the way to live in the community.

1.8. What would you add or remove from the citizenship education that you received?

Nada, todo estuvo bien.

Nothing, everything was fine.

1.9. Do you consider that your attitude toward your family and neighbors has changed after your participation in the program?

Si, bueno, bien porque bien. Les decía vamos a hacer esto, todos ayudaron. Nosotros nos llevamos bien con los vecinos. Ellos también atendían los talleres.

Yes, well, it was good. I told them let us do it, and everybody helped. We get along pretty well with the neighbors. They also attended the workshops.

PART 2. OPINION IN REGARD TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

2.1. What has your participation in solidarity groups meant to you?

Ahi había un poquito de negativa, de desconfianza. Trabajar en grupo no es fácil. Pero quedaron muy bien.

People adopted a negative attitude, and there is mistrust. Working in groups is not easy. But they paid very well.

Yo les decía: vean que no vayan a quedar mal, yo soy la responsable del grupo.

I told them: do not do wrong; I am the responsible for the group.

2.2. What has been the attitude of the members of your solidarity group?

Ellos luego siguieron aparte con los créditos. Ellos se portaron muy bien, nos comunicábamos, venían a mi casa y preguntaban y consultaban cualquier cosa.

They continued with the credits by their own. They did very well, we communicated. They came to my house, asked and consulted me about thing.

2.3. Do you recognize the main problems in your community?

Imagínate, tantos y todos. El agua, el gas... Vea como están las calles... todo, imagínese, las lámparas en la calle no tienen bombillos, la basura que a veces pasa.

Imagine, there are so many. The water, the gas... See how the streets are... everything, think about it, the streetlights do not have bulbs, and the garbage is picked up just occasionally.

2.3.1. What would you do to contribute to the solution of these needs?

Bueno, yo diría que la Asociación de Vecinos siga luchando por las mejoras. Yo colaboraría en lo que pudiera, porque ahora yo no puedo entrar a la alcaldía ni a la gobernación ahorita como una ciudadana cualquiera. Que debería ser la AV. Si me dicen que vamos a acompañarlos, yo digo entonces, vamos.

Well, I would say that the neighborhood organization should continue fighting the improvements. I would collaborate in what I could, because I cannot go to the municipality of the state government as regular citizens. The neighborhood association should do it. If they let me go with them, I would say, let us go.

2.4. Do you think that the program has contributed to your motivation to participate in the community? Why?

Si contribuyó porque se vio concientizar a las personas en tratar de mejorar. A pesar de que no tenemos aceras ni calles, tratábamos de dejar todo limpiquito. Nos hablaron de eso. Aquí solo pasan los políticos en campaña, que ahora si vamos a hacer esto y luego nada. La gente no asiste a las asambleas porque es mentira.

Yes, I contributed because it motivated people to try to improve. In spite of the fact that we do not have sidewalks or streets, we tried to leave everything clean. They talked about that. The politicians only come while campaigning, that now we are going to do this or that... People do not attend the assemblies because it is a lie.

No hacen nada. No hacen nada por favorecer a la comunidad. Se cogen los cobres (el dinero). No construyen nada.

They do not do anything. They do not do anything for the benefit of the community. They steal the money. They do not build anything.

2.5. Do you think that community participation is important? Why?

Si. Participar es, ¿cómo es? Porque uno plantea los diferentes problemas que uno tiene, nos reunimos. El otro va recogiendo los comentarios y el amigo se lo plantea a los organismos que competen. Cuando uno va en grupo no nos atienden. Que tiene que ser una sola persona que lleve el planteamiento.

that I have, we gather. One person collects the opinions and the friend communicates them to the institutions in charge. When we go in groups, they do not receive us. It has to be only one person who can take our proposal.

Yes, I do. Participation... because I can mention the different problems

2.6. Do you or another member of your family belong to a community group or neighbor associations?

Yo participé en la AV y ahora es mi hija la que está encargada. La AV está vencida porque eso no es ahora, está inhabilitada. A la asociación no la aceptan, por las nuevas organizaciones. Entonces ellos vienen a buscar cartas.

I used to participate in the neighborhood association but now my daughter is in charge of it. The registration of the association is expired because its power has been restricted. People do not accept the association because of the new organizations (the communal councils). Nevertheless, people still come for letters.

2.6.1. If affirmative, how would you describe your participation?

Antes, me ponía los pantalones y salía. Ahora es mi hija quien lo hace. Ahora dejan malos ejemplos. Los de aquí no quieren participar porque vemos mucha corrupción.

Before, I used to go out but, nowadays, my daughter does it instead. People are a bad example these days. People from this barrio do not want to participate because they perceive a lot of corruption.

2.6.2. If affirmative, since when?

Bastante tiempo, desde 1994 hasta 1998. Mi hija continúa desde 1998.

For a long time, since 1994 until 1998. My daughter continues since 1998.

2.6.3. If negative, can you explain why?

Ya participa.

(The person has participated).

2.6.4. If negative, are you willing to participate in any community group or neighbor associations?

Ahora no por mi edad.

Not now because of my age.

2.7. Do you know of any community organization in your barrio?

Los Consejos Comunales cercanos.
Aquí están trabajando metiendo las
cloacas. Eso es la alcaldía.

*The communal councils, which are in
the proximities. Here they are
installing the sewer. That is the
municipality.*

2.8. Would you like to continue participating in the program? Why?

No porque en ese tiempo tenía una
urgencia muy grande, a la vez,
estaba haciendo un SAM y el
crédito tardaba mucho. Después de
ese crédito no agarré más. Si me
gustaría porque todavía nos falta
mucho aquí en la casa. Tenemos
que terminar la cerca, terminar
adentro. Sería cuestión de que uno
pagara nada más.

*No, I would not, because at that time I
had a big emergency. I was in a SAM
and the credit was not yet approved.
After that credit, I did not apply for
another one. Yes, I would like to
because my house lacks a lot. We have
to finish the fence, to finish the inside.
It would be only if we pay.*

Appendix F. Examples of home improvement projects

Source: HABITAT-LUZ 2006

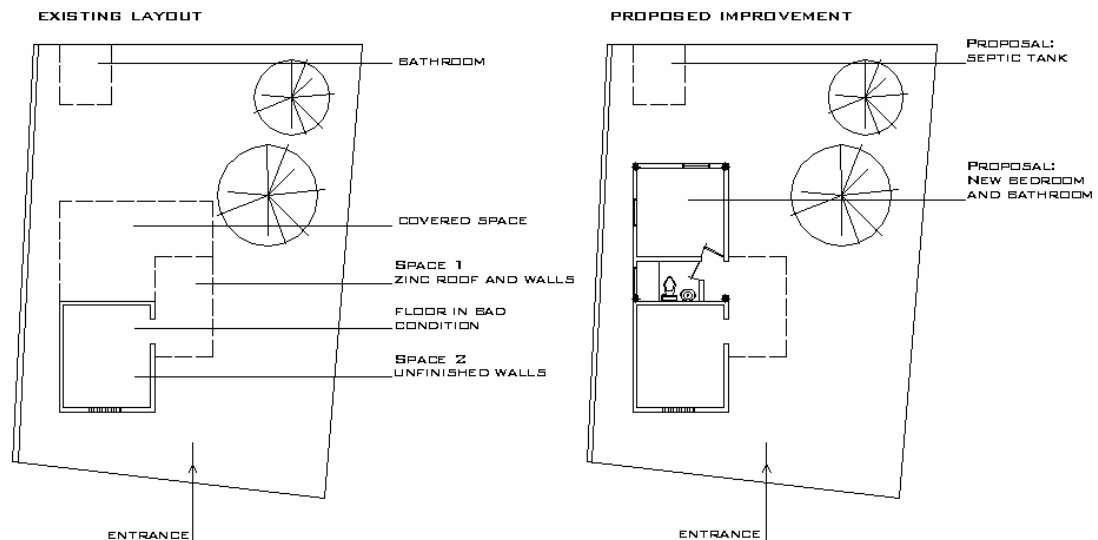


Illustration 32: Housing improvement project. Example 1.

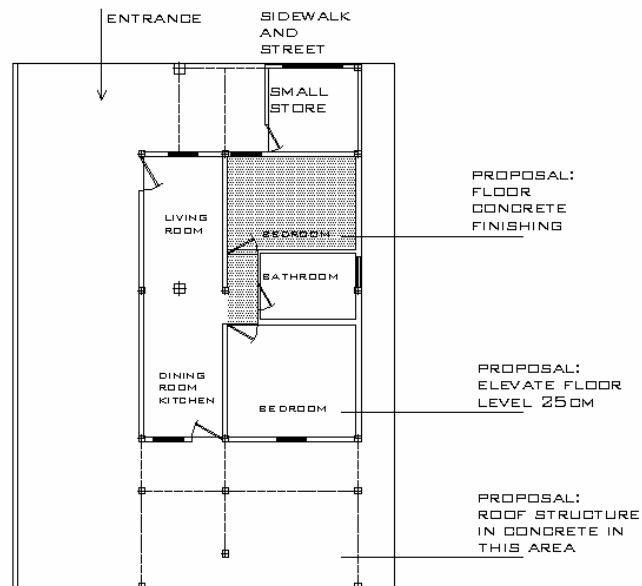


Illustration 33: Housing improvement project. Example 2.

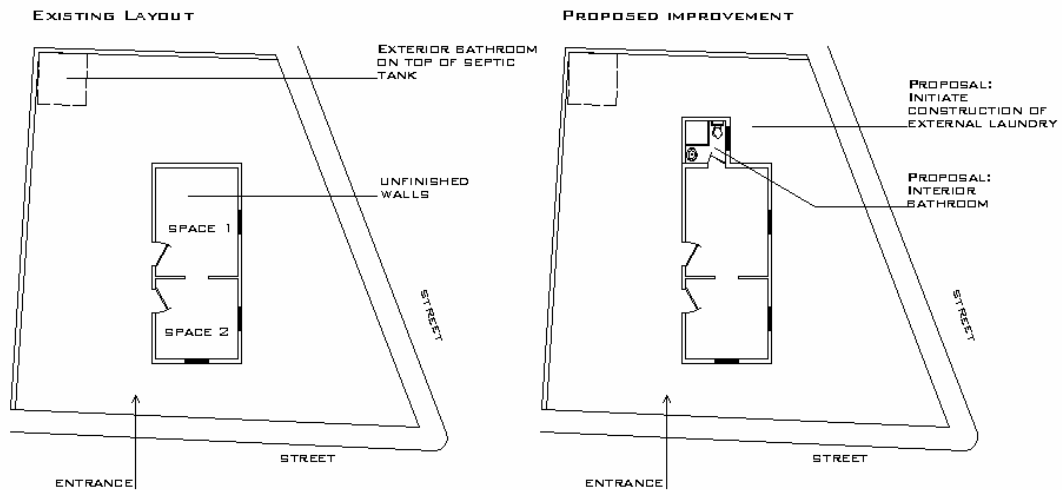


Illustration 34: Housing improvement project. Example 3.

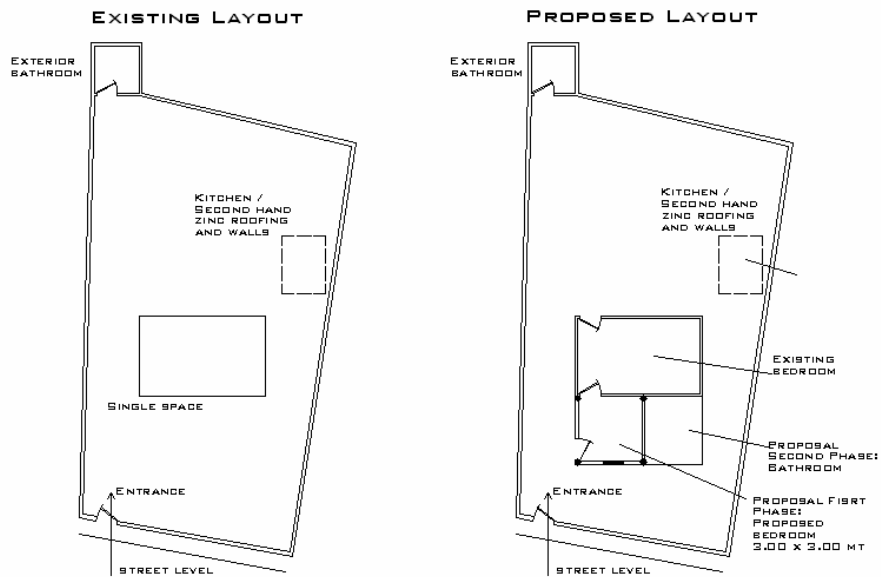


Illustration 35: Housing improvement project. Example 4.

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